and

The Complete Collection

Version 1.0
Built from scans by the Atari community
Compiled by Kay Savetz

Mid Michigan Atari Magazine was published from July 1986 through February 1987 by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society. It began as the newsletter for just that group, and expanded to be the single-source publication for several independent Atari users groups in the Michigan area.

In March 1987, with the addition of the Atari Club of Grand Rapids, a city in the southwest of the state, they dropped the "Mid." Michigan Atari Magazine continued publication through December 1988. Between the two names, 29 issues were published in all.

The direct precursor to these magazines was ENERGY — The Michigan Computer Consortium magazine. All of those issues are not scanned yet, to my knowledge. Some of them are here: https://archive.org/search.php?query=creator%3A%22The+Michigan+Computer+Consortium%22 If you have missing issues, please email me at kay@savetz.com

The pages in this PDF were scanned by myself and Jon Bowers over a period of years. Special thanks to Kevin Chase and Internet Archive for making this collection possible.

—Kay Savetz, April 20 2022

MID MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

july 1986

still .75¢

Rumors

ATARI'S 32-BIT MICRO COMING SOON- Atari has a 32-bit computer in development (the "TT"). The company recently signed a Unix licensing agreement with AT&T and Atari chairman Jack Tramiel has indicated that the new machine will run under Unix. When the new computer is introduced, current ST owners will be offered an option to upgrade their machines to use the Unix operating system. It will use a 68020 processor, and an array processor will be available either as a $600 option or built in. The array processor is a WEITEK AP which lists for $2500 now!! 2049 by 2048 pixel resolution with unlimeted choice of colors on the screen at once. All for about $3000. No release date was specified for the new computer, but it may be as early as January '87.

ATARI TO QUIT TAIWAN PLANT- Jack Tramiel is planning to shut down Atari's production line in Taiwan. In remarks posted on a bulletin board service after he met with Atari owners in Massachusetts, the Atari chairman said that under the right conditions computers could be constructed in the US with the same cost efficiency as in Taiwan. Tramiel set no deadline for the manufacturing changeover but he did indicate the move was not in the immediate future.

AMIGA DEVELOPERS UNHAPPY- Third-party software developers are voicing their concern over what they perceive is a lack of support and concern by Commodore Business Machines. Many developers have dropped plans to continue Amiga development until they receive some assurances that Commodore will supply necessary development information. Commodore is trying to assure developers and the Amiga dealer network that support will continue regardless of internal restructuring. Last week, Randy Weiner of Amiga Technical Support told developers they "will continue to receive the full support of Commodore. We are not about to 'dump' on anyone. I, for one, understand the importance of such support, and what it means to the future of the Amiga, and Commodore itself."

ATARI PLANNING SUMMER PRODUCTS- Atari Corp. is holding some product announcements from the CES and scheduling them for latter in the summer. Compatible with the ST product line, the new products will include a 3.5 floppy with 10MB storage capacity, a super-hi-res graphics board with 1,000 line resolution and a new sound chip. Other new products are memory and multitasking upgrades as well as a new expansion box for holding the multiple upgrades.

BATTERIES INCLUDED TAKES STOCK- Michael Reichman, president of the successful Canadian software firm Batteries Included, announced a merger with ITM Corp. This means Batteries Included stock may be publicly traded on the Canadian Stock exchange. Reichman also said that Russ Wetmore, author of HomePak, has accepted a position with Apple Computers in Cupertino, CA. Whatever he is doing is evidently very hush-hush as Russ said only that he was working in "advanced research production" and would say no more.

Says ANTIC MAGAZINE writer JACK POWELL in one of his CES Trade show reports: "By the way, I'm writing this report outside of the COMMODORE exhibit- it's the only place in the hall where it's quiet enough to concentrate."

MINI-PAWN MOVES ON- The Pawn, the successful -- and difficult -- 520 ST graphics/text adventure, is currently being adapted for the 800 XL and 130 XE and will be released in this country through Firebird Licencees. The Atari 8-bit version of the game will have all the complexity of its ST cousin and the same incredible parser and graphics, but half the graphic resolution. Programmers at Magnetic Scrolls, the technically sophisticated software development group from Great Britain, are playing with the display list to imitate the ST full color spectrum on 8-bit screens.

NEW 8-BIT DRIVES- Atari Corp. is still not ready to announce the long-rumored 3.5-inch drives for the 8-bit line. But reliable sources within the company report that the drives will have a capacity of 325K, formatted, and the Disk Operating System will be compatible with DOS 2.5.

ATTENTION

800XL OWNERS:

RAMASTER

AS REVIEWED BY C.H.A.O.S

256k UPGRADE

130XE COMPATIBLE

$30.00

(ADD $2.75 FOR S&H AND C.O.D. CHARGES)

INCLUDES EVERYTHING

BUT RAM CHIPS-$4ea

313-261-7609

MID MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

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This publication is the official newsletter of the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, an independent user group of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of C.H.A.O.S. members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of C.H.A.O.S.

Other user groups are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine.

FUTURE INVOLVEMENT OF OTHER GROUPS

We are soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs to become affiliated with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We will continue to put out a high-quality monthy magazine, and with a greater volume through mailings to more than just one club, we can achieve MORE pages and LOWER production cost per copy.

If You are involved in an Atari club, show this newsletter to your membership. Your club could be covered in our pages for about the same price per copy to your club as you now pay for a smaller local newsletter. As we also need contibution of articles, no reduction in your local input would occur. Contact us through the Post Office Box listed below.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from members are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS, or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

We welcome the exchange of newsletters with other clubs. Exchange newsletters, as well as other inquiries, should be sent to:

Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Atari News

ONE FOR THE GIPPER

Per the May 20 USA TODAY. Commodore reported a loss Jan/Mar qtr of of $36.7 million, up from the 20.8 million loss this same quarter last year. Atari made 9 million in the Jan/Mar '86 quarter, normally the slowest quarter of the year...

OKIDATA DEBUTS ATARI PLUG 'N PRINT KIT

Okidata (609/235-2600) has unveiled their new Atari ST Plug 'N Print Kit for the Okimata 20 personal color printer. The new modules connects the Okimate 20 to both the Atari 520ST and the Atari 1040ST series PCs. Atari ST users can now print more than 125 colors, using Okimate 20's special color ribbon, to create high resolution graphics, pictures and professional quality overheads on a variety of media, including acetate.

ON THE 8-BIT SIDE

Atari officially announced the rumored 1200 baud modem at the June CES. According to official sources it will be compatible with both lines of Atari computers.

ICD has successfully tested a new parallel device for the XL/XE AtariComputers.

It presently includes the following features:

RAMDISK - up to 1 Meg in 256K blocks. This device has its own power supply so the RAMDISK contents remains intact when the computer is turned off!

Printer Interface - uses a standard 850 cable to plug into your parallel printer!

Printer Buffer - use any portion of the RAM as a printer buffer (spooler). This also retains data when the computer is turned off!

Serial Interface - a standard 850 type (P:R: Connection type) serial interface except this one uses a UART which allows concurrent I/O through more than one channel at a time! ROM software emulates the 850 handler!

Hard disk interface - supports both SASI and SCSI hard disk controllers. Use any size hard drive and up to 8 floppy drives with the same computer and interface. We will have a packaged 10 or 20 Meg drive with case, power supply, and controller available shortly.

The XM801 dot-matrix printer was shown at CES. It does graphics but has no Near Letter Quality mode. No interface is necessary. Users will have to choose between a cost of less than $200 and paying about $250 for a NLQ printer and an interface.

ST ON THE TV

The new 520ST's have the connection to drive a TV. Also, you can drive a moniter with these if you are willing to build a cable. Reviews are mixed on the quality of the TV display. Some reports are very enthusiastic while others are quite negative.

16-BIT ANNOUNCEMENTS

New and most interesting in the ST software lineup is OS-9 from TLM Systems, Peasantville, NY. This Unix-like operating system for the ST permits true multi-tasking, while providing access to BASIC, C, Fortran and Pascal.

Mark Williams Company demonstrated its C Programming System, a powerful compiler with a set of advanced utilities designed specially for professional program development with the ST. It will sell for $180.

ANTIC PUBLISHING INC.,COPYRIGHT 1986.
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ANTIC ONLINE'S REPORT FROM APRIL 1986 COMDEX
(EXCERPTED)

The Atlanta COMDEX is one of 35 high-tech trade shows put on each year by The Interface Group. COMDEX is an acronym for Computer Distribution Exposition, and its focus is to serve the independent distributer of computer products. Organizers expected that there would be 40,000 visitors at the 3,300 booth units, which represent over 700 companies.

Against a backdrop of names like Epson, AT&T, Panasonic, Zenith, and IBM, Atari and Commodore waged a battle for 16-bit supremacy. Commodore's Amiga exhibit would have won the prize for "best float" if COMDEX was a parade. This could be seen as a reaction to that company's absence from the last COMDEX in Las Vegas, when Atari scored innumerable hits with its roundup of third-party developers for the ST. This time Commodore answered in kind, with an armada of impressive Amiga programs.

Meanwhile, Atari bolstered its image with a gathering of products for its 8- and 16-bit computers.

2,000 ST developers worldwide are expected to bring a bonanza of products to market yet this year. Atari is making a point about the number of programs available for the ST computers, and has issued a $10 "ST Software Catalog." The catalog lists 21 word processors, 16 databases, 7 spreadsheets, 25 financial programs, 16 communications programs, 22 graphics, 10 music, and more than 200 other programs for the Atari ST.

New and most interesting in the ST software lineup is OS-9 from TLM Systems, Peasantville, NY. This Unix-like operating system for the ST permits true multi-tasking, while providing access to BASIC, C, Fortran and Pascal.

CAD-TYPE PROGRAMS

Several graphics products attracted attention. The Graphic Artist from Progressive Computer Applications, Inc., claims to be a new category of software, beyond Computer-Aided Design (CAD). While providing full CAD features, The Graphic Artist also contains complete business graphics and text-handling systems with built-in and modifiable fonts. Using this product, a single worker can produce professional monochrome documents containing accurate graphic elements to

any desired scale alongside any desired text. The package sells for $495 and is available now. Optional command language is $245 additional.

Easy Draw, by Migraph, lacks some of the power of Graphic Artist, but only costs $150, while retaining quite impressive abilities to create B&W and color drawings of great accuracy and detail.

An unusual CAD product is the PCBoard Designer distributed by Abacus Software (of Grand Rapids, MI). This monochrome program attempts only to facilitate the frequent need to design printed-circuit boards. The program's library contains a reasonable selection of electronic devices, and users can add their own if needed. Move these to the work area and arrange as desired; specify the connections and they are made automatically. The traces are marked out in several widths with proper spacing. PCBoard Designer costs $395.

CAD-3D, by Tom Hudson, makes it easy to create three-dimensional objects of great complexity, and examine them from all sides as wire-frame or solid models in monochrome or color under several different lighting conditions. Saving successive frames in RAM or on hard disk enables effective animation of the object. CAD-3D is available from Antic for $49.95.

FILE SERVER

A file-server system for the Atari ST computers was shown by BMB Compuscience of Canada, Ltd. The server is actually an IBM clone (a Compaq in the demonstration) dedicated to the task. With a 20-megabyte hard disk onboard and a $895 card installed, the server can accomodate 63 computers which must be either IBM compatibles or Atari STs equipped with BMB's interface box. The interface costs $495 and will be available in July. This sounds like an expensive way to set up a local area network, but it is quite reasonable compared to the cost of using all IBM equipment. When connected to the file server, each computer has its own assigned space that can be protected with a password of the user's choosing. Depending on the permissions of the network manager, each user may also read from or write to other users' space, and even exchange data and programs if the formats are compatible.

Atari News

THUNDER (!!!!)

Thunder, from Batteries Included, is a desk accessory for the GEM Interface that checks spelling in real-time. It also expands abbreviations, and analyzes statistics for a given document. The program can ring the system bell whenever a typed-in word does not match a dictionary word. The writer can then correct any obvious error, or if stumped, call up a sophisticated series of replacement words from

the dictionary. The expansion feature makes it possible to set up several hundred abbreviations (5K worth), which when typed into a document are automatically expanded to full length. For example, BI could stand for Batteries Included. A small repertoire of abbreviations is provided with the program. The analysis feature counts syllables, syllables per word, total words, sentences, words per sentence, and performs some tests - such as percentage of words with more than three syllables. It also calculates a FOG index and a Flesch index and tells the writer the educational level required for the average reader of the document. Thunder is compatible with many GEM-based document programs. It costs $39.95 (WOW!!!) and will be available July 1.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Batteries Included also introduced the Isgur Portfolio System (IPS) for securities management. This includes complete data for all equity investments, including total value, gains and losses of the portfolio as of the last price updating. A full-featured telecommunications section of the program, called I$S Talk, automatically calls Dow-Jones, CompuServe or other services for prices and posts them to the individual security records. You can cause it to signal you when preset criteria are met (e.g., "signal if stock decreases 10%"). Dozens of special features make IPS a program that must be seen to appreciate. It will be available June 5 for $199.

Dac-Easy is a powerful but inexpensive accounting program ported to the ST from the IBM, in which version it was named Product of the Year by InfoWorld in 1985. Amazing as it seems, this fully implemented and integrated "business tool" costs $69.95. It includes general ledger, accounts receivable, accounts payable, purchase order control, billing, inventory and forecasting. It does not include payroll or taxes. It was designed by three CPA members of the company and is the tool Dac Software Inc. uses to do its own multi-million-dollar-a-year accounting.

While many companies have jumped on the ST bandwagon, ICD has been quietly churning out important hardware items for the 8-bits, including a straight-connect modem cable for $14.95, a low-cost printer connection for $59.95, and The P:R: Connection, a replacement for the Atari 850 modem interface. The P:R: Connection ($89.95) is a small boxwith one printer port and two modem ports. It gets its power from the computer and works on any Atari 8-bit machine.

Yes, now you can have a 1-megabyte 130XE. The ICD Multi I/O Board plugs into the parallel bus port and sells for $199 for a 256K version and $349 for a 1-megabyte board. Included in the board are a parallel printer interface, a serial printer/modem interface, a printer spooler and a hard disk interface. According to ICD, a standard hard disk can be used with either a SASI or SCSI controller card. The product is also compatible with the Supra hard disk.

ICD's display system was configured with two hard disks and one floppy, with built-in software permitting segmenting of the hard disks. The screen displayed four hard disks at 260K, 10Mb, 9Mb and 3Mb, plus three RAMdisks at 192K, 256K and 512K; and finally the one floppy. Oh yes, and a 64K printer spooler. ICD said that any DOS can be used with the Multi board. The whole thing sounds like a dream come true for 8-bit power freaks.

MICRO RTX- Atari ST Real-Time Multitasking Operating System Kernel, MICRO RTX, is exactly what the Atari ST programmers have been asking for. A fully multitasking operating system AND complete TOS compatibility! MICRO C-Shell was the first professional software development environment for the Atari ST. Now Beckemeyer Development Tools has done it again- a reliable multitasking extension to the TOS operating system. Some of the features are TOS Compatibility, complete GEMDOS and BIOS Compatible I/O System, true Real-Time Performance, software control of Priorities and Time-Slicing, event signaling - supports asynchronous events, interprocess message passing via FIFO Queues, timeout options on all message and event services, adds forks and real Pipes to GEMDOS, supports multiple users via RS-232, MIDI, or DMA, High-Level and Assembly Language Interfaces, easy to use services.... and more.

Amazingly, the MICRO RTX kernel is only 16K! MICRO RTX is completely independent of the user's application. There is no linking required. An easily maintained configuration file is used to control the number of active processes and other static declarations. The maximum number of processes is limited only by the available memory. MICRO RTX includes a comprehensive 46-page manual, and sample source code. Assembly language source code to the C bindings is also included. Suggested Retail Price: $69.95 From Beckemeyer Development Tools, 592 Jean Street #304, Oakland, CA 94610

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the newsletter, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEM

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at:

517-371-1106

INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

MEETINGS

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Astronomy-Physics Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.

S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE

East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

PIRACY

Piracy and illegal copying of software is not condoned by C.H.A.O.S. nor allowed at any club sponsored function or activity.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Leo Sell

Welcome to the Inaugural issue of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. C.H.A.O.S. is now publishing its own, independent newsletter in order to better serve our members. Look for more help, more news, more programs and more ATARI than ever before. This brings to mind, however, the need for membership participation. Now, more than ever, we will need your help. We need your ideas, your questions, your articles, etc. This is your newsletter.

I'd like to welcome our new Newsletter Editor in Chief, Jeff Bone. Jeff was very active in the highly successful Computer Show last month. He has a lot of talent and we expect great things. Thanks for volunteering Jeff!

Speaking of the show...

The Mid-Michigan Computer Show was a roaring success - attendance-wise, financially and for the vendors. Several vendors in fact, have already signed up for the next show.

Yes, the first show and sale of its kind ever held in Lansing, went over real big. It seemed that during the planning, every time I received a report, they had been forced to rent additional room because tables just kept selling and selling. In fact, at the end they were very near to having to turn vendors away.

Attendance was over 1800 people. Many found incredible bargains. Even C.H.A.O.S. had a special Show disk for only $1.00. (Sorry, it was only available at the show). C.H.A.O.S. had its share of success too. We signed up 10 or 15 new members or renewals, did about $200.00 in library business, got great exposure and our share of the gate was about $400.

For those of you who didn't make it, you missed a fine display of Atari-power organized by John Baker (8-bit) and Mike Clewley (16-bit). The ST more than held its own against the Amiga, with high-resolution pictures, great commercial software, and a midi-syntesizer demo going on most of the time.

The 8-bit table was crowded as always. I don't know what sort of machines those people will buy, but it was certainly difficult walking past our tables. People coming to the 8-bit end of the table were treated to a great display of Atari abilities. It should have generated a fair amount of interest in the "old" machines.

There were a few disappointments, mind you. We were told to expect IBM there with 5 tables and Xerox and several other big names, but apparently it didn't work out. Oh well, there was still plenty to see and bargains to be found.

I personally stuck with cheap... I picked up Snooper Troops II and Return to Castle Wolfenstein, for $5-7. Great games. Picked up floppy disks for 40 cents per disk... Maybe I'll have enough for awhile. Other people found great deals on Printers, parts, books, manuals and so on.

A great deal of thanks are in order. I cannot give everyone proper credit, but I would especially like to thank the following:

The Mid-Michigan Computer Consortium
for getting the ball rolling.

John Nagy, Adam Slonim and Jeff Bone
for representing C.H.A.O.S. so well and for making the show such a success overall.

John Baker and Mike Clewley
for organizing the C.H.A.O.S. 8-bit and 16-bit involvement.

Greg Barr
for his generous donation of "Join the C.H.A.O.S." t-shirts.

Everyone who assisted with the C.H.A.O.S. tables. They are too numerous to list, but I really thank you all.

If you missed this one, don't miss the next. The bargain hunting and the excitement aren't to be missed.

In my CES...Atari Impressions article, I mentioned the stong need for Atari users to lobby software houses. Here are a few of the companies Atari 8-bit owners should lobby. If you own a 400, 800, XL or XE, you should write these companies and tell them you want support for your machine and that you will purchase high qualitiy software for it. You should also let them know that you do not and no one you know engages in piracy, despite the "public" image of Atari owners.

The following list shows names and addresses and a partial list of software being produced for Apple, IBM and Commodore only:

Activision, Inc
Drawer 7287
Mountain View, CA 94039

Little Computer People Discovery Kit, Alter Ego, Borrowed Time, GBA Championship Basketball - Two on Two, Championship golf, Garry Kitchen's GameMaker and GameMaker library, Hacker II, Murder on the Mississippi

Infocom

125 Cambridge Park Dr
Cambridge, MA 02140

Ballyhoo, Trinity, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Moonmist

Avalon Hill
4517 Harford Rd
Baltimore, MD 21214

Super Sunday, Statis Pro Baseball, Dreadnoughts, Tournament Golf, Spitfire 40', Macbeth, Darkhorn,

DesignWare
185 Berry St
San Francisco, CA 94107

Remember!, Cryptocube, The Grammer Examiner, Mission Algebra, The Body Transparent, States and Traits, European Nations & Locations, The Music Teacher Series

Polarware/Penquin Software
2600 Keslinger, Box 311
Geveva, IL 60134

Comprehend Interactive Novels, Fantasy games

Bantam Electronic Publishing
666 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10103

Shelock Holmes, I Damiano, The Forth Protocol, Know your own IQ/Personality, The Complete Scarsdale Diet, The Cave of Time, Escape, Road Rally USA, Creative Contraptions, Fantastic Animals, Walt Disney Software (Comic Strip Maker, Card & Party Shop

Springboard Software
7808 Creekridge Cir
Minneapolis, MN 55435

The Newsroom, and Clip Art

Weekly Reader Family Software
4343 Equity Dr
PO Box 16754
Columbus, OH 43216

Stickybear: Typing, Spellgrabber, Town builder, Basic, Math II, Printer. Also: Car Builder, Codes and Cyphers

Sir-Tech
6 Main St
Ogdenburg, NY 13669

Wizardry series, Rescue Raiders, Galactic Attack

Review

RAMASTER 256K 800XL Upgrade: BEST BUY

A Review by John Nagy

For quite a while the only "BIG MEMORY UPGRADES" were done by the few, the brave, the tech and hacker-types. But now there are many commercial "EASY MEMORY EXPANSION KITS". 130XE-compatable 256K upgrades for the 800XL are advertised for as much as $100. Several are available at the $50-$60 range... and then you have to buy the eight required 256K RAM chips at anything from $2.85 each (mail order) to $5.00 (at local electronic suppliers). Your total upgrade COULD cost nearly $140 (which, for quadrupling the capacity of your $100 machine really isn't out of line).

Still, it seemed a bit too much money to me, and I pondered the possibilities of marketing my own "bare board" following the plans put in the public domain by CHAOS member Claus Buchholz. The modification was small, but it took a real maze of jumpers, wires, and such. I couldn't imagine it could cost much more than $10 a board to eliminate most of the nasty work, plus parts... the whole thing for under $30 in parts, plus the cost of the RAM and my time.

The same thing occured to BOB CARLINI in Westland, Michigan, but HE did it! In fact, he OUT-DID it with the RAMASTER 130XE compatable 256K upgrade, a super-simple product completely assembled (less RAM) for only $30!! (ABC Consulting, (313) 261-7609, or 35522 Ford Road, Westland, MI 48185)

I ran into Bob one late night on the CHAOS BBS (517-371-1106) where he was checking out all the latest upgrade software and news. The chat that followed resulted in him bringing a really fine video-tape demo for our May meeting. (ATTENTION OTHER CLUBS: Bob can lend or send you a copy of the tape, it shows VERY CLEARLY how ANYONE can do the upgrade.)

The product is a high quality circuit board with silkscreened markers and gold headers (Bob says it costs very little more to go first class). It has all the chips needed REGARDLESS of which ANTIC chip your machine has. Some HIGH DOLLAR kits require you to buy a new ANTIC chip - another $10-$15 - if your machine is a later production model!

His promo material says Bob can do an entire upgrade in 12 minutes (unless it's a rare late production model with soldered chips- Yike!). It's true. I have done five of them now and the longest I took yet was one I did in 22 minutes "on stage" at our big May computer show.... when the soldering iron wouldn't heat. It requires only the barest of talent, one phillips screwdriver, a solder gun, and maybe a small jewelers screwdriver to pry out the old chips. Plug in the RAMASTER and 8 RAM chips, then 6 solder points that couldn't be simpler or better depicted in the very good instructions... and IT'S DONE!!! My Aunt Marie could do it. She's 70, though, and she probably wouldn't.

The RAMASTER is as 130XE-compatable as any upgrade available anywhere for the ATARI 800XL. Software is available through the club, the BBS, and commercially that makes use of the extra memory space, making your XL TWICE as good as an XE. Most useful are RAMDISK drivers that set the area of memory up as though it was an super-fast (read:instant!) disk drive, or even as more than one disk drive.

All 130XE software recognizes and uses the memory as though it was in an XE. As with other XL upgrades, though, programs that require ANTIC bank switching as well as CPU switching will not perform. TYPESETTER had a problem in one mode but it seems to be only in early release copies. Programmers are wise to this and are avoiding ANTIC switching where possible for 256K users.

Best of all, now you can run BASIC XE (from OPTIMIZED SYSTEMS SOFTWARE, OSS) and still have room for a full size ramdisk! ATARIWRITER+, SYNFILE, SYNCALC, etc. have been updated to use the extra memory, although some use only the XE-size 128K (but that multiplies the available file room by a factor of as much as 10!!!).

Bob is offering bare boards and unassembled kits for lower prices (for the diehard tech!!). RAM is also available from him if you dont want to chase it yourself. Check his ad in this magazine for details.

In all, I can't say enough good about the RAMASTER kit. The price is the lowest ANYWHERE and the quality and ease of installation can't be beat at any price.

NOTICE TO CHAOS CLUB MEMBERS ONLY!:
A limited number of RAMASTER's complete with the 8 RAM chips and a diskful of software and documentation is available direct from CHAOS for $50 total! Hurry!! Also available: 288K kit with instructions and software for the original 800 (!!) that works with SYNFILE and SYNCALC like an AXLON board... and you choice of upgrades for the 130XE: 320k for $35, 576K for 60$, 1088k for $110, each with full instructions and software. (These are not as easy as the RAMASTER!) Contact me (John Nagy), any Club officer, or ask at the meeting or on the BBS. See the Officer roster on the back page of the newsletter.

Publication Library

by Richard Evans

Check out the Chaos Publications Library! It's a great compliment to the program library and provides information on the Atari for the novice and experienced programer alike. The library now contains about 30 books, several dozen magazines, and 48 months of Atari user groups newsletters from across the country. Our book collection ranges from introductions to BASIC and Assembly Language to the Atari technical hardware notes. Our newsletter collections contain both recent and classic information Atari programing, reviews of Atari software, news on new products, and tips on Atari use. Our magazine collection now includes the last several years of ANTIC and ANALOG as well as selected issues of Compute!, Creative Computing, and other computer related magazines.

The publications library appears at each Chaos meeting. Materials can be checked out to club members for one month.

If there are books you'd like to see added to the library, let us know. Likewise, we're always happy to accept donations of materials from club members.

Following is a partial listing of Chaos publications library books:

Atari Basic - by Richard Haskell
Mapping the Atari - by Ian Chadwick
De Re Atari
Dr. Wackos Miracle Guide to Designing and Programming Any Atari Computer
The Visicalc Book
Kids and the Atari - by Edward N. Carlson
Free Software for Your Atari
Machine Language for Beginners -Compute!
Your Atari Computer - Ian Poole

Plus many more!

So, at the next meeting, see you at the library table!

Industry Report

CES...
Atari impressions
by Leo Sell

Impressive. Awesome. Great. These are the kind of adjectives that come to mind when you see the Atari display at CES. Atari really seems to have its act together at the trade shows...To a point.

One of the striking things was the misinformation common among software developers regarding the Atari 8 bit line. Apparently all 8 bit owners need to contact and lobby the software houses and let them know we are here and we want software for our machines. Don't play dead! Lobby all of the software houses you can. I believe we can make a difference. There are somewhere in the neighborhood of 3.5 million Atari 8-bit owners out there, and I believe that at least 2.5 million of them are actively using their Atari and buying software. One software company mentioned that there are 6 million Commodore owners out ther (I'll bet that includes VIC, 64, 128, Plus 4 and all). From what I have seen, maybe 40 percent (2.4 million) are as active as Atari owners. By this estimation the active ownership is about equal between the 2 machines, which means our making a noise should make a difference.

On happier topics...

While I was disappointed not to see the CP/M emulator, the IBM emulator, the rumored 1200 baud modem and some of the other products that are still vaporware, I did see the new 80 column adaptor for the 8-bit computers. In a word...WWWOOOWWW!!!. When you see the display output you are greeted with a very clean and crisp image (provided of course you are using a monochrome monitor). The screen image was as good as anything I have seen including the monitor on an IBM terminal. It is nearly ready for production, but they are holding it up until AtariWriter Plus has been revised for it. A number of other word processors and products are being revised for it as well. It also has a built in Printer Port. With this adaptor, and the XM series of modems, the need for any other interfaces, including the 850, is eliminated- unless you need genuine RS232 compatibility or a Serial printer port. But those are not common applications.

A myriad of products are being developed for Atari computers, in particular for the ST. Unfortunately, support for the 8-bit was as soft as ST support was strong.

Things were not altogether dismal for the 8-bit line. Some real nice products are being produced and prices are coming down. My favorites were from Hi Tech Expressions and from Baudville. Hi Tech Expressions has products called CardWare and Heartware used to personalize musical animation, paper printouts and computer greetings. Another called PartyWare gives you the ability to customize invitations, hats, games, banners and other party stuff. WareWithAll is a kit of printer supplies to add color and flair to your productions. It should work well for PrintShop as well. Suggested retail prices ranged from $9.95 to 14.95. Great stuff.

Baudville is a Grand Rapids company that is expanding from solely supporting Apple, to other machines including both Atari lines. Their products have not been completely converted as yet, but the software on display was very impressive.

Atari showed the new Star Raiders II. Many of you will recognize it as a re-titled version of a game called The Last Starfighter that never made it past Beta testing.

Covox showed an interesting voice recognition system, capable of being trained to recognize individual voices. A flight simulation like the movie Firefox would be real interesting with this product. Interesting possibilities for programming too.

The brightest spot on the Atari horizon is Britain. Software from Rainbird, Firebird and MasterTronic was incredible.

Artworx is supporting both machines with Bridge 4.0 as well as other titles.

Infocom announced several new titles: Ballyhoo, Trinity, Leather Goddesses of Phobos (a titillating romp through the solar system...Hmmmm) and Moonmist. No indication which machines they will be produced for.

My favorite ST program, hails from Batteries Included. Thunder is a spelling checker that runs concurrently with any GEM application such as word processors. The Comdex Report will give you full details, but believe me, this program is neat, neat, neat!!

A lot of my time was spent talking to developers and getting our address to them for literature on new products and potentially, reviews of new releases. Most were very receptive and know that user groups are their best allies. Responses ranged from "We never send review copies to user groups" to "Heck, we'll put you on our list to do Beta testing of new software." Hopefully the contacts I made will be fruitful for all concerned.

All in all I found CES to be a mixed bag for Atari owners. ST owners can look forward to some great support and programs. 8 bit owners will have to work hard to make that happen for them.

CHICAGO CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW
June, 1986

By John Nagy

Chicago winds and temperatures down into the 40's welcomed us to the Summer CES, but the showings from thousands of manufacturers were hot enough to make up for it. It looked as though all of the 100,000 people that were expected through the 5-day affair came Sunday.

The CES is like a candy store for grownups. Every manufacturer and distributor for electronic entertainment and leisure is there trying to show retailers why they should carry their wares. The result is miles of isles on multiple floors of five buildings full of lavish, seductive displays of almost everything. Home video (both hardware and tapes) was the biggest single catagory, and included a huge section devoted to the PORN market. Car and home stereos of every description ran second in sheer volume. Computers ran third (or forth)... but there were a jillion interesting sidelines.

At CES, computers are for FUN. Games ran everywhere on monitors of every description. And ATARI ruled the show with the largest and busiest display of all (as well as being the largest ATARI display ever put together). The computer and software vendors were (mostly) on the lower level of the emmense McCormick West plaza, and the escalators deposited all visitors smack at the gate to ATARI HEAVEN. MIDI demos blasted fabulous synthesized music while "COMPUTEREYES" gave people a digitized view of themselves. There were maybe 200 wall mounted monitors showing everything from ST graphics to new 7800 game machine entries. Another 30 or so carrels each displayed ATARI 8-bit and ST's running software from ATARI's invited software development companies. The teeming crowd never let up inside the mamoth exhibit. Another area had some of ATARI's biggest coin-operated machines, with long lines waiting for a free play.

The restyled 2600's were stacked to the sky along with the new 7800 game console. Rows of machines were lined up for all to play. The 7800 graphics are a clear step up from the 8-bit computer line, but not all the way to the resolution of the ST line. ATARI had a corner on the FUN, with no one ATARI product being featured more than others. Although many of these same devopers offer high-power financial, business, and utility software, CES is for GAMES.

Does the world need a new ATARI game machine? After all, isn't the computer line enough? That's the thought that ran through my mind as well as through many others when the 7800 was announced. But both SEGA and NINTENDO introduced new machines at the CES to bring their arcade

quality play to the home with units nearly identical in capabilities to the 7800. There appears to be big money and bigger competition in high-end games. SEGA is even bringing out their own computer- for better games.

Moving on away from the ATARI extravaganza, the ATARI ST was seen everywhere, second only to the COMMODORE 128 for showcasing the third-party software. Notably absent from many booths, however, were titles for the 8-bit ATARI. EVERYONE is bullish on the ST, it appears, but many are shying away from the XE series. EPYX has several titles for the 2600, 7800, and the ST including WINTER GAMES, but when questioned at

their booth about their lack of 8-bit titles, they responded, "ATARI won't even support their own machine, so we sure won't. The ST is different, it's the whole focus there (at ATARI) now, so that's where we are concentrating. BODYLOG, another developer who is showing some really nice hardware/software for real bodybuilding and bio-feedback in a fascinating game format called BODYLINK for the Commodore only. When asked about the ATARI, their response was one we came to hear over and over:"Oh yes, the ST. We plan to have a version out very soon." When I pressed about the 8-bit line, BODYLOG sneered, "that machine is dead. They don't even build the 800 anymore!" What about the XE, says I. "Oh, well, I suppose if it turns out to be something, we will rethink it. You have to realize, there are six million Commodores out there now." I was inclined to educate this fellow to the world of ATARI facts and figures, but I realized that if he made it to his own booth, he had to wade through the 8-bit ATARI exhibit. If he still believed that the 8-bit ATARI was dead after seeing that, I knew he was lost to reason.

Happily, not all developers feel the same way. Arthur Waslh of ARTWORX said that such attitudes were "Rediculous. ATARI support for the 8-bit line is terrific. It has been and continues to be a great performer for us." He continued, "Although the ST is getting the spotlight now from many developers, ARTWORX is activly looking for more 8-bit titles. Most of our material is submitted in C-64 format. We want more ATARI-8 software, and even have taken our programmers off of ST projects to convert Commodore titles to the small ATARI." ARTWORX has been a leader in the $10-$15 game pack range, an industry move that makes buying games on a budget much more realistic. Walsh related that porting programs between machines isn't even very hard. "STRIP POKER" (an ARTWORX title) was in fact written for the ATARI 8-bit, then ported up (graphics intact) to the IBM, AMIGA, and finally the ST.

Industry Report

MASTERTRONIC is another bottom-dollar game maker, combining excellent graphics with prices under (!) $10 a title. More than half of their titles (Including NINJA, ELEKTRAGLIDE, and THE LAST V-8)

are available as "flippies" for both the 8-bit ATARI and the Commodore, and more ATARI and ST support is coming.

GAMESTAR from ACTIVISION showed "GBA CHAMPIONSHIP BASKETBALL, TWO ON TWO" as a dramatically improved "sequel" to the top selling "ONE ON ONE". You can still only have two people playing, but each can control TWO players on the screen using pre-arranged "plays", or two can team together against the computer's two players.

It is ONLY available for the Commodore. An ST version is to be out in the fall. The ATARI-8? No plans at this time. The now familiar, "we'll wait and see. But the ST, thats for sure." Sigh.

But the ATARI 8 was not the biggest outcast at the CES. Taking honors as the new machine least likely to find entertainment software: the AMIGA. Only IBM had fewer titles being shown anywhere. There was perhaps one AMIGA for every 8 ST's on display at developer tables. And what about the COMMODORE exhibit? Well, it was two floors away from the rest of the computer booths, and took up a room roughly 1/6 the size of the ATARI display. In it I found almost a dozen systems on display, with nearly as many visitors. NO AMIGA!! I asked the obvious question. "AMIGA was at the COMDEX show two weeks ago. THIS show [CES] is for consumer products." Isn't the AMIGA for consumption, I asked incredulously. "The company thinks of the AMIGA as a business and vertical market machine," the Commodore lady announced curtly. Yike! I wonder if they told anybody?

Said ANTIC MAGAZINE writer JACK POWELL in one of his CES Trade show reports: "By the way, I'm writing this report outside of the COMMODORE exhibit- it's the only place in the hall where it's quiet enough to concentrate."

COMMODORE was pushing the successful C-128 line almost exclusively. Although not on display, the new 64-C was announced to be more than just a repackaged C-64 in the sleek new box. GEOS (a GEM-like operating system) will be coming out with it, as well as some bundled software. The company is visably split, and is stepping back after putting what may have been too many eggs in the AMIGA basket. The 8-bit market is about to be freshly shaken to find new buyers. There have been noises from some corners that the AMIGA may become a self-supporting division or else have to split off entirely. Interestingly parallel with the APPLE/MAC affair. (APPLE dosen't come to CES at all. Software for their machines was similarly absent).

The ST and the 8-bit ATARI are not enjoying a totally friction-free co-existance either. Everything from clubs to magazines are feeling shock waves resulting from the "competition" between the products, with some software developers feeding the fire with "either-or" mentality. ANTIC and ANALOG are both pushing new ST sections or entire new ST magazines. Meanwhile, the 8-bit users (who are perhaps 95% of the ATARI owners) complain that as much as half or more of their favorite magazines are now about machines that they don't have and perhaps can't afford to move into. In response, ANALOG magazine (who has had an ST "magazine within a magazine") will have an EXTRA issue this fall devoted entirely to 8-bit ATARI's. Like they USED to do.

Meanwhile, COMPUTE MAGAZINE annouced a $10,000 programming contest for the ST. Representatives from these and many other computer, media, and entertainment magazines handed out free copies to the CES crowds.

DATASOFT showed ALTERNATE REALITY for the ST. They say their programmers really like the ST, while very few plans for AMIGA titles were announced. "MERCENARY" for the 8-bit ATARI was also in the DATASOFT exhibit, showing interesting vector graphics and full blown adventure gaming in three dimensions on, below, and in orbit of the planet TARG. This game of epic scale and superior backup story and paraphanalia is one of many european imports shown at CES.

Perhaps the most impressive of the imports for the ST was STARGLIDER, being marketed by FIREBIRD. It has the all-out best cockpit and starship flight simulation I have seen yet, as well as a good story and realistic action. The mouse controlled flight really gives goosebumps and butterflies. STARGLIDER comes with a novella that gives clues to survival as well as making the play all the more satisfying.

Speaking of flight simulation, the ST, and satisfaction, SUBLOGIC (makers of FLIGHT SIMULATOR) showed their 3D Graphics package for the IBM. It is capable of commercial grade animation within 256K. They showed various screens with moving models and sweeping "camera" viewpoint similar to those in the Mick Jagger video "Hard Woman to Leave". I asked about plans for the package for the ST. "Well, there doesn't seem to be much call for the graphics package for non-IBM machines. But if enough people ask for it, we may put FLIGHT SIMULATOR out for the ST this fall. At exactly that moment, a 50-ish gentleman came up and asked "how soon will this package or FLIGHT SIMULATOR be available for the ST?" His name tag identified him as a retailer. From Sears and Roebuck. Ever hear of them?

The world is asking. The ST is answering!.

VOS IST DOS?

by Leo Sell

Please forgive the fractured German. Every now and then I realize how confusing a computer and terms such as DOS, etc, are to the newer users. This article is a small attempt to lift some of the confusion surrounding Atari DOS 2.0/2.5. I have tried to make it as basic as possible.

TRAINING MANUAL FOR DOS 2.0/2.5

Boot a disk containing DOS 2.0 or 2.5. From BASIC, type DOS and press Return. The following menu will appear on the screen:

DISK OPERATING SYSTEM II VERSION 2.X
COPYRIGHT 1984 ATARI CORP

A. DISK DIRECTORY	I. FORMAT DISK
B. RUN CARTRIDGE	J. DUPLICATE DISK
C. COPY FILE	K. BINARY SAVE
D. DELETE FILE(S)	L. BINARY LOAD
E. RENAME FILE	M. RUN AT ADDRESS
F. LOCK FILE	N. CREATE MEM.SAVE
G. UNLOCK FILE	O. DUPLICATE FILE
H. WRITE DOS FILES	P. FORMAT SINGLE

An explanation of the menu items follows:

A. DISK DIRECTORY - This option allows you to display or print a list of the files on a disk. You can see all or part of the filenames and send the directory to any valid device such as E: (Screen Editor) or P: (Printer). The default is: show all files (*.*), on the Screen Editor (E:). To see what I mean, type A and press Return twice. A list of all files on the disk will scroll down the screen. If there are a large number of files you may need to pause and start the scrolling using Control-1.

The odd characters I have already used (*.*) are called wild cards. They are useful when you want to limit the directory search. The asterisk is used to replace any combination of characters. For instance, to show only files with a .BAS extender, type A and press Return once. At the

prompt, type *.BAS and press Return. Only files bearing a .BAS extender will be displayed. (By the way, an extender is the character(s) following the period in a file name; you may have a maximum of 3 letters in an extender).

For a printed listing of the directory, type A and press Return. At the prompt type *.*,P: and press Return. This will result in a list of all file names on the disk printing out. Of course, you can limit the directory search in the same way previously mentioned. Use the same syntax to send a copy of the directory to any valid device. If you want a copy of the directory as a disk file, repond to the prompt with
.,D1:FILENAME.TXT

The comma is often important as a divider. If a comma shows in a prompt, it is probably necessary in your response.

B. RUN CARTRIDGE - This option exits DOS and returns control to the cartridge. Usually any program that was in memory before going to DOS, must be reloaded.

C. COPY FILE - Use this option to copy a file between devices. For instance, to copy a file from drive 1 to drive 2, type C and press Return. When the From, To prompt appears type:
D1:FILENAME.EXT,D2:FILENAME.EXT and Return.
Don't forget the comma and don't add any extra spaces. The file names need not be identical and you can also copy to devices other than a disk drive. The most common use would be in printing documentation (.DOC or .TXT extenders) files without a word processor. To copy to the printer, respond to the From, To prompt with:
D1:FILENAME.EXT,P: and Return.
Two last notes. Wildcards can be used with the

copy option. For instance, copy all .BAS files by responding with D1:*.BAS,D2:*.BAS. Another thing to note is that this option is not suitable for copying a file from and to the same disk (unless you want a second copy under a different name). To copy a single file use option O.

D. DELETE FILE(S) - This option allows you to eliminate unwanted files from the disk. Be sure that the file is not longer of use before deleting it - this option should be considered permanent. To delete a file, type D and press Return. At the prompt, type the filename and press Return. In a few moments, the dirty deed is done.

E. RENAME FILE - You can use this when you want to rename a file. Type E and press Return. When prompted, type the Old name, and the New name separated by a comma. Wild cards are operable, but be very judicious in their use.

F. LOCK FILE

G. UNLOCK FILE - Another name for these options is Protect and Unprotect. Locking a file protects it agains accidental deletion, renaming and overwriting (but not against being formatted over). To protect all files on a disk, type F and press Return. At the prompt, type *.* and press Return. DOS will then lock all files. When you next look at the directory, you will see asterisks beside each of the locked files. Notice that wildcards may be used. For instance, to protect only the .BAS files, respond to the prompt with *.BAS, and press Return.

These same procedures hold true for Unlock as well.

H. WRITE DOS FILES - DOS files are necessary for a disk to boot on the computer. Insert a formatted disk in the drive, type H and press Return. Follow the prompts to write the files DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS. DOS will ask 9 which drive number to write the files to. After the files are written, the disk can then be booted on its own.

I. FORMAT DISK - Formatting a disk prepares it for use by the disk drive and computer. At this point there is a significant difference between DOS 2.0 and 2.5. When you use this option in DOS 2.0, the disk is formatted in single density and can hold 90K of information. DOS 2.5 formats in "dual density". Dual density is also referred to as density and a half. The disk will hold about 140K of information. However, a caveat...DON'T USE DUAL DENSITY!! In DOS 2.5, use option P and format the disk in single density. Dual density is not compatible with all disk drives. If you use dual density, you may regret it. Use either single-density or a DOS with true double-density.

J. DUPLICATE DISK - This option can be used to duplicate a disk, but I would recommend you use one of the copy programs from the C.H.A.O.S. Library. For example, Copymate is far more flexible and powerful than this option.

K. BINARY SAVE - Option K is used primarily by Machine Language programmers.

L. BINARY LOAD - This option allows you to load a machine lanquage file. Once loaded it will automatically run. To use this option, type L and press Return. When the prompt appears, enter the filename (wildcards are allowed) and press Return. Most M/L files will have an extender of .OBJ, .COM or .EXE.

M. RUN AT ADDRESS

N. CREATE MEM.SAV - Both option M and N are for more advanced programming uses.

O. DUPLICATE FILE -This is the option to use when you are duplicating a single file on a single disk drive. Type O and press Return. DOS will

prompt you for the file name to be duplicated. Large files may need to be read twice, so watch the prompts carefully.

P. FORMAT SINGLE - This option is exclusive to DOS 2.5. It allows you to format (stongly recommended) in single density. Always use option P rather than option I when using DOS 2.5.

Well, there is more to be said, but that's enough for this month. Next month we'll try to deal with a few more facts and hints for DOS such as common error messages and how to append one file to another.

****

C.H.A.O.S. June Meeting Minutes

by Gary Ferris

Summer is here and it's normal effect was observed in a lighter turnout than recent months- about 50 in attendance. We do welcome the three new members who did come and sign up (rather than go to a boring old beach).

We were treated to a side by side comparison between the ST and Amiga computers and shown some of the strengths of both systems.

The disk of the month was demoed and had NEW games and utilities. We also introduced the newest release from Keith Ledbetter, "MPP EXPRESS" for MPP modems. It's available now (like EXPRESS 1030 and 850) in our library.

We had 1020 printers available with a disk of programs that take advantage of its capabilities for $30. We still have some available, I suggest getting with John Nagy ASAP. These prices are only for C.H.A.O.S. members!

Our treasury took a beating this month with a printer for the newsletter editor, getting the 1020s and startup costs on the new news magazine, but now stands at a healthy $678.68. With the additional monies we should receive from sales of products on hand, we look forward to being able to do some exciting things for the membership in the future.

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE

By John Baker

Summer. Aaahhh, a time to get outside and enjoy yourself. Take care of those projects that you have been planning for all winter. Besides, nothing new or important happens as far as computers during the summer, right? Wrong!!!

The C.H.A.O.S. library is in the midst of a massive rework and will continue this project thru the summer. What this means to you as a member, is a far greater selection of new software. The total number of disks that will be available to you have doubled and in some sections even tripled.

One additional item that bears mentioning, is the fact that now all disk sales are limited to members only. Since members are the main supporting factor for the library, we feel this policy is in their best interest.

A constant influx of new programs from the BBS, as well as software trades with some of the largest and best known users groups in the country is resulting in a library that we feel will be second to none.

New and unique files are selected each month and placed on our "Disk of the Month" feature disk. Many times these files have been received only days before the disk is made up. Certain files on our Disk of the Month will only be available on that disk, and will not provided on the BBS. Fourteen disks (12 monthly + 2 Special disks) for only $50.00 is an exceptional bargain!

By publishing our own newsletter, we should have sufficient room to feature a library disk monthly review section, and provide more detailed information on certain files.

Remember, we have one of the best selections of software and instructions for upgrading your 800, 800XL, or 130XE, and a disk full of this software in included in the purchase price of the upgrade kits that we offer. We have compiled a disk full of software for use with the 1020 printer/plotter. This disk will be included free in the purchase price of the 1020's which we now have for sale.

We are pulling out all stops to make the C.H.A.O.S. library your complete Atari resource. Check with us, we feel that you will be pleasantly surprised. Any questions or comments on the library are welcome and encouraged. And if you have public domain software that we are lacking, and feel it would make a good addition to our files, please send it in.

Atari Technical

The following is reprinted from an unknown newsletter. Our apologies for not giving proper credit.

DISK USERS:
DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

by Jery White

While working on a BASIC program very late one night, I had saved quite a few versions of my program using filenames such as "D:TEST1" and "D:TEST2". Shortly before sunrise, I decided to call it a day. I saved the most current version of my still unfinished program as "D:TEST8". I then realized that I had previously saved a version called "D:TEST9", and that I had better clean up my work disk before shutting my bloodshot eyes.

I called DOS and took a quick look at the directory file. With my fingers running much faster than my brain, I renamed TEST8, TEST9. After pressing Return, I realized that I now had two programs with the filename TEST9. since I wasn't sure which TEST9 program was the most current, I decided to rename one of them as "TEMP". Much to my surprise, DOS renamed both "TEST9" programs as "TEMP". Now what?

I went back to BASIC and loaded "TEMP". Knowing the program in RAM was the first version of the "TEMP" found in the directory file, I listed it onto the screen to see if it was the most current version. No such luck. It was the second version of "TEMP" that I needed. Bat's breath!

I then tried to solve my problem by going dack to DOS and deleting the first "TEMP". This was just not my night. DOS deleted both my "TEMP" in the directory file. I had solved my problem but I was more than a bit cranky. It just seemed to be absurd that DOS should rename more than one filename at a time. Before getting to sleep that morning, I vowed to correct the situation so that it couldn't happen again.

Again a quick look at COMPUTE's "Inside" ATARI DOS, I found that I could correct this problem by simply eliminating one BCC instruction. This can be done using two NOPs. (Editor's note: Huh?). If you'd like to change DOS.SYS version 2.0s so that RENAME affects only one file, just follow these instructions:

With your ATARI BASIC cartridge in place, boot up using a disk that contains DOS 2.0s. At the BASIC ready prompt, in immediate mode, enter the following commands then press Return.

POKE 3117,234:POKE 3118,234:X=USR(8309)

Note that the DOS utilities did not have to reload from disk. Since no deferred mode lines of BASIC were entered and no program was loaded, DUP.SYS was unaltered and still in RAM. We simply jumped into DUP.SYS with that immediate mode USR command.

In order to make our patch to DOS permanent, use the "H" function to "write" DOS "files".

Editor's Note

by Jeff Bone

Welcome fellow Atarians to the premier issue of the "Mid Michigan Atari Magazine". It looks good doesn't it?

Finally, a magazine completely devoted to your favorite computer. Is it a dream come true? If so, how long can it last? The answer is simple. As long as YOU continue to support it.

Support is not just plunking down your hard earned money at the local news stand to purchase it. Nor, is it simply joining a local Atari club to get it delivered to your door. This magazine NEEDS your participation and input. We need YOU.

"But, what can I do?", you say. I'm glad you asked. Remember all those frustrating hours in front of your keyboard trying to de-bug a program? Then, you discovered a neat programming short cut. Or, a memory saving sub-routine. Don't just keep it to yourself. Write it down and share it with us.

Perhaps you've purchased some dynamic software. Tell us about it. Let us know if it really is worth skipping the next mortgage payment.

Maybe you've developed a great technical fix for your malfunctioning keyboard. Tell us how you did it. You are probably not the only one with that problem.

If you are wondering how to submit articles, here's how:

The preferred way is to upload your article to the C.H.A.O.S. BBS and leave a message to me or the Sysop.

The next best way is to pass a disk with your article on it, to me, the President or the Vice-President.

Articles submitted in printed form are not likely to be used until the article can be re-keyed and loaded from disk. Obviously a lot of extra work for someone.

Also, an effort is being made to incorporate other mid Michigan Atari clubs to participate in this magazine. The benefits would be tremendous. More pages of information, agreater pool of resources, and additional support. And YOU will be the one to benefit. So, don't be surprized if you see new names in future issues.

Until next time, good computing...

Telecom

DOWNLOAD

By John Nagy

Summer weather has taken its usual toll on the BBS usage. We are down to under a thousand calls a month (!!!) That's still one call every 45 minutes, day and night, seven days a week. Much of our volume is national calls checking out our top selection of texts and software for memory upgrades. We have over 50 files of this type in all, and most are online at all times.

We had been having a great deal of trouble getting the BBS to work the way we want at 1200 baud. This is due to simultaneous conversion to SPARTADOS, double sided drives, a new 1200 baud modem, BASIC XE, and a 256K 800XL. Gary Ferris has gotten into the act, and with his help we have gotten it to come together now. We have it working now and online, but don't be surprised if there is a bug or two left...

Look for hot news on the BBS weeks before you get it in the newsletter, and in much greater detail! We regularly get news and articles from ANTIC ONLINE and other telecommunication services, and they will be available in far greater length than we can fit in the newsletter, where we are forced to summarize.

A VIDEO and AUDIO message base is now online! Join us in the new "SIGHTS AND SOUNDS" BASE for reviews, trivia, exchange of video tapes, MIDI and CD info, etc. Guy Hurt got the tape rolling on this one in our GENERAL MESSAGE base along with Mitch Wells, and with the new BBS developments, there is now room for "one more" as well as now allowing many more messages in each base.

REMEMBER: The CHAOS BBS is there for you at all times with the latest information, entertainment, and hottest new programs for your ATARI! Call it today! (517) 371-1106!

ST

ST-UTTERINGS

by Brian Goluska

I would like to thank all ST contributors and participants in the May Computer Club show in Lansing. We went a long way in showing that the ST has a great volume of software available. For those who missed the show, we had 3 520's and a 1040, 3 of those in color and 1 monochrome. And a MIDI! Anyone who was at the show early should know that we initially had the MIDI in F-sharp and the ST in C-flat for the first hour until our music expert arrived. It sounded much better later when the ST and the MIDI were in harmony.

Hot items for the ST are TOS in ROM, ramdisks, and 1 Meg upgrades. Everyone should have TOS in ROM. Everyone should get ramdisk software. While 1 Meg ST's are attractive, there was some reluctance at our last meeting to doing the upgrade. The price (only about $50 to go from 1/2 Meg to 1 Meg) is very nice. The idea of piggybacking the memory chips, and changing the traces on the system board seems to cause some hesitation. Most of us have only 1 ST, and the chance of introducing a problem into a working machine is scary.

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the second Saturday of each month. The ST meetings are much less structured than the regular CHAOS meetings, both because there are not so many people and because the ST owners need to trade information and discuss topics informally so much more. Right now we have about a dozen ST owners at a meeting, and a couple of people who are considering ST's.

At the last meeting, Mike Clewley's 10 Meg hard disk was demoed. It was an "actual Atari" hard disk, although there weren't any Atari logos on it. The demo showed very fast processing; SLIDESHOW, for instance, ran very quickly. Lots of rumors were discussed. We saw a demo of the A-CALC spreadsheet and dbMan. A-CALC seemed OK, although not as powerful as VIP Professional (which is a 1 for 1 LOTUS look alike). dbMan is much like dBase II/III, but not a look-alike in that commands and syntax are unique.

Among a fair amount of literature from the CES was a copy of START Magazine, the ST quarterly that ANTIC is publishing. At $59.95 for 4 issues with a 3 1/2 inch disk included, and 12 issues of ANTIC, the magazine seems to offer a lot. Unlike ANTIC, START will not print program listings, but will instead include a disk with each magazine.

Much of the rest of the meeting was taken up discussing odds and ends of various software packages. While discussing First Word it was mentioned that superscripts and subscripts are difficult to use (mouse invoked, while keyboard would be better), and also don't show on the screen. Well, on a monochrome monitor on the ST superscripts and subscripts do show on the screen (what-you-see is what-you-get on super- and subscripting). In fact, now that I have both a monochrome and a color monitor, I really appreciate the monochrome for certain tasks, word processing especially.

At the close of our meeting, Time Bandit was shown. I'll close with a quick review: Time Bandit from MichTron. Advertised at $39.95. Color monitor only. Arcade game, with internal puzzles. One or two players. One player uses joystick or keyboard, two players use joysticks. Time Bandit gives your player(s) a choice of 16 different adventures. Each time you return to an adventure, it gets tougher (but it might offer more opportunity). Some of the adventures are complex (a starship; a packman; a search for a crown...). Beginning format is run and shoot, "anything that moves is hostile", except in a two player game it's best to avoid shooting your partner. The screen is split, so each player can wander away, but see each other if they're in the same area. Later there are puzzles to be solved. (Where is the crew of the starship Excalibur?) Humor and satire are included. (Don't transport objects into deep space.) Best of all, the animation is well done. One problem with Time Bandit is that it has a glitch that now and then ends the game unexpectedly - the game goes into attract mode sometimes in the middle of play. This is most annoying if you are doing well. Despite the glitch, Time Bandit is, in my opinion, the best arcade game so far for the ST.

HELP START Just Starting

Got a New Atari ST? Some Quick Hints

by Brian Goluska

The Atari ST, using the mouse and GEM, is quite a bit different from your Atari 800, Commodore C-64, or IBM. And while the IBM and compatibles can run a mouse and GEM, most people using IBM type computers are only familiar with MS-DOS type environments. So here are some quick hints that may help you with your ST.

OPENING, CLOSING, AND DIRECTORIES

If you have an open directory on the screen, drive A for instance, you don't have to close A, switch physical disks, and open A again. Instead, switch disks and press the ESC key. This will give a directory of the new disk. Similarly, many programs display their own directory box. A quick way to check for files is to click on the directory entry, backspace and make changes, and then click on the shaded name bar. For example, in BASIC, the default will be a directory of *.BAS. If you change the name to *.*, you can click on the title bar and see all files on that disk.

DELETING OR COPYING SELECTED FILES

Have you played with the ghost window, trying to get exactly the files you want to delete or copy? An easier way is to shift-click on the files you want - this method allows you to get each file specifically. To delete, Hold the shift key down and click on the first file to delete. It will become highlighted. Keep the shift key down, and move to and click the next file. You now have two separated but highlighted file names. Continue until all desired files are highlighted. Now let the shift key up, and click and hold on a highlighted field. The entire field can now be dragged to the trash can or to another drive.

GEMSYS OFF AND ON

Do you know that an Atari 800 is about 30 % faster with the display turned off? Of course you knew. The ST has a similar feature in the Gemsys Gemflag. On the 800, the processor stopped when the screen needed to be displayed, and could run without screen interrupts if you turned the display off. In ST BASIC, you can turn significant overhead off by telling it to ignore the screen, mouse, and keyboard.
POKE SYSTAB+24,1:REMARK TURN GEMFLAG OFF
POKE SYSTAB+24,0:REMARK TURN IT BACK ON
Of course, save your file before running it. If your program does something unexpected, and your keyboard and mouse are turned off, you have no choice but a system boot.

I CAN'T READ LINES I CHANGE

Changed lines in BASIC show up in a separate video style. Unfortunately, the default may be a

style that is hard to read. The solution is on page C-141 of the BASIC manual. It shows how to change the "ghost line" style to whatever you want. I like:
POKE SYSTAB+2,1:REMARK THICKENED
Caution: The table on page C-141 is the bit number, not the decimal value. Bit number 3, underlined, would be a decimal value of 8 for the poke.

THE SCROLL BAR

The right hand scroll bar shows you where your view of a file relates to the entire file. There are many ways of using it, besides the scroll arrows. Clicking on the shaded area on the scroll bar will give you one "view" forward or back in the document (depending on the program your're running). The best way to use the bar, however, is to "grab" the window. That is, click on the white window area and hold the mouse button down. Then you can move your view area to where you want. This is especially important when you're reading or changing large files.

LEARNING THE RETURN KEY

On non-GEM machines, the RETURN key most often executes the command. Learning when the RETURN or an ST executes a command, and when it cancels the command, takes some practice. For example, in "Installing an Application", you must click the mouse on "OK" to execute. The RETURN key cancels the installation. On the other hand, if the "Insert Disk B in Drive A" display is on the screen, the RETURN key will execute the command, and is easier than using the mouse, especially when "disk flipping" to copy a lot of files. Which brings up another important topic.

TOS IN ROM AND RAMDISKS

If you don't have TOS in ROM, get it! It makes a world of difference, adding around 200K useable memory. Then, with TOS in ROM, buy a Ramdisk program (if you can't write one or find a public domain one). If you have only one drive, Ramdisk is a necessity, not a luxury. For instance, it takes 3 passes and "disk flips" to copy a file with one drive, one for the open, one for the copy, and one for the close. If you have 10 little files to copy, it is a long boring process. With a Ramdisk, it's one human step to copy to the Ramdisk, and one step to copy from the Ramdisk to the target floppy. The following are hints for BASIC programmers:

ONLY VOICE 1 WORKS IN BASIC

Use the WAVE ENABLE command to enable voices before you use them. BASIC defaults to voice 1 enabled, voices 2 and 3 off.

RND FUNCTION RETURNS A "1"

Most of us expect RND(0) to return a value between 0 and .99999, and expect an expression like 100*RND(0) to return a value between 0 and 99. Unexpectedly, RND(0) in ST BASIC will sometimes return the value "1", and the programmer must take this into account.

STRING DIMENSIONS WORK DIFFERENTLY

On the Atari 800, strings were dimensioned with the length of the string. On the ST, strings can grow dynamically, and the dimension is the number of strings with that name. In 800 BASIC, the phrase DIM A$(155) will give 1 string 155 bytes long. In ST BASIC the same phrase will give 155 strings. If you fill A$(n) one byte at a time, you will get 155 one byte strings, with several bytes of overhead for each! So if you are loading your 800 programs onto your ST, watch out for your strings.

I hope the above will help new ST owners get started quickly, especially if they can't make it to the CHAOS ST meetings, or don't live in an area with an Atari club.

SIDENOTE

Antic Magazine gives an address to get those hard to find 13 pin ST connectors and other cables:

Alpha Products
5740 Corsa Ave
Westlake Village, CA 91362

Review

COMMODORE MOUSE CONTROLLER FOR YOUR ATARI!
(Or- The Mouse That Jack Built)
by Jay Pierstorff

There has been much talk of mice and mouse controllers lately. The new Atari ST's come equipped with their own mouse (mice? meeces?). Anyway, those of us who have an Atari of the 8-bit persuasion have watched with great envy, wishing we too, could have mice. Even if we could buy an ST mouse for our 8-bitters (which we can't) it wouldn't work with our existing "joystuck" programs.

But while wandering the aisles of the computer stores, I noticed a Commodore product beaming through the glass. "The Commodore 1350 Mouse for the C128" was printed on the package. The price was less than $50. Those lucky 128 owners! Too bad Atari hasn't made one for their computers.

The Commodore and the Atari have always been real friendly about using the same joystick varieties. Would this... could this... might this mouse work? The plug looked very much like a standard joystick connector. I bought it and took it home.

I could tell my Atari 130XE was nervous about the whole works, but undaunted, I loaded a trackball program, plugged in the mouse... but wait, the plug would not stay in! Upon close examination of the connector, I discovered that it was about 1/8 of an inch too short to reach the connector pins, (Commodore computers don't recess their joystick ports quite as much as Atari). I was Puzzled for a moment and then I thought about using a joystick extension cable! Ha! I quickly found my extension cable and plugged one end into port 1 and the other end plugged perfectly to the mouse!

With trembling fingers I slid the mouse across the desk, and then... nothing. The cursor was on the screen but the mouse yawned. It would not control the cursor, not even a little. Now what... I tried to think, maybe it would work with a Koala or Touch Tablet program! I booted and failed.

Maybe it was a "joystick emulator!" A Joystick in mouse clothing! I loaded the graphics editor of The Print Shop, IT WORKED! IT WAS A JOYSTICK EMULATOR ALL ALONG! Suddenly, it occurred to me I should probably calm down. I got down off the computer table and tried a few more programs. Everything that would normally run with a joystick, was working with this imitation mouse.

The only non-workable feature of the 1350 Mouse is the right button. The left button is the standard "fire" button on a Joystick. The right button is connected to pin 9 (the Atari paddle controller pin).

The Commodore Mouse is very usable. Even though your computer thinks it's a joystick, you will think it's a mouse! It really does an amazing job of convincing you! It feels good in your hand and moves smoothly across any flat surface. A clean desk or a "mouse pad" will give best results. A mouse pad is a rubber backed thin cushion that gives more control over mouse movements. For mouse maintenance, the rubber-coated, steel ball can be easily removed for cleaning.

The 1350 Mouse is different from a true optical driven mouse. A true mouse has proportional control. The faster you move the mouse, the faster the cursor will move. The 1350 mimics this action but it can't move the cursor any faster than a joystick would. Slower cursor movements are imitated by the mouse delivering short, stop and go pulses to the computer.

A true mouse will always take the same desktop travel to move the cursor from one screen edge to the other. The 1350 will move the cursor at maximum speed as long as the 1350 is in any motion at any speed. That means a fast, long push may not move the cursor as far as a short, slow push! That's not really a problem though, it's just a differenc e that can be worked with. It can even be an advantage for limited desktop space.

The Commodore 1350 Mouse worked with all games and programs that require a joystick. Some are improved by the mouse and some are more suited to joystick control. The type of programs that are best suited to the mouse are those that require precision movements of cursor or gunsight centering on the screen. The least suited are the programs requiring continuous scrolling movements. They often require picking the mouse up and starting again if you run out of counter space. Drawing and doodling programs worked fabulous, Koronis Rift scores improved markedly, Rescue on Fractalus was confusing! Donkey Kong was ...different! It just depends on the type of movement involved. Many games took on a whole new feel when played with the mouse. Many were even more fun with a mouse than with a joystick !

Do you really need a mouse? Yes you do! If you own and use a joystick, you will definitely enjoy owning a 1350 mouse. I wouldn't part with mine. Don't throw your joystick away yet, but mine is seeing less use since I let the mouse in the house! The Commodore mouse is not just for the C128 anymore! It's one of the best darn joysticks since the old Atari licorice stick!

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TOTAL SYSTEM PRICE $1095.00

Atari Technical

PEEKS AND POKES

by Kenneth J. Pietrucha - JACG

Last month's column showed you how to poke the sound registers instead of using the SO. or sound command. If you missed this column, go back and read it. It's short and will be worth your time.

If you have any musical ability, you will soon realize that some of the notes or tones generated by the ATARI are slightly off pitch. What I want to show you this month is how to combine two of the voices to generate a single precision note.

The demonstration program is divided into two parts. The first part does the simple mathematical calculations that are poked in part two and generate the actual sound.

First, the desired precision tone frequency, in cycles, is entered as F. The program then performs an intermediate calculation for (AUDF), the control rate. The variable, AUDF, is then used to calculate the course and fine frequency that will be poked to give us our precision tone.

The pitch is a calculation of the tone that will result when FINE and COURSE are combined. Pitch is not needed for the system to operate and may be deleted.

After the calculations are made, the sound registers of voice 0 and 1 are set to off. Location 53768 is poked with 80 to turn the clock on and combine voice 0 and 1.

The frequency of FINE is poked in 53760 or Voice 0, while COURSE is poked in 53762 or Voice 1. The precision tone is heard for a few seconds, then the sound is turned off.

The program will generate sounds up to approximately 64 KHZ in frequency. This is far above your range of hearing and may not be too popular with your dog.

The same technique can be used to calculate another precision tone using the remaining two voices. Once you have two precision tones, you can use them to generate the tones to dial your phone. I have written programs to dial my phone by holding the mouth piece near the monitor speaker. It may not be practical, but it did prove that the accuracy of the tones was present. The North American standard is ± 1.5% for the digit generators.

```
 1 REM PRECISION SOUND
 2 REM BY KENNETH J. PIETRUCHA
 3 REM J.A.C.G. 11/6/85
 5 GRAPHICS 0
 7 COARSE=0:FINE=0
10 ? "THIS PROGRAM CALCULATES THE TWO"
15 ? "FREQS NEEDED FOR PRECISION"
20 ? "SOUND CLOCKED AT 1.789790 MHZ."
22 ?
23 ?
25 ? "ENTER THE FREQUENCY DESIRED"
30 INPUT F:AUDF=(1789790/(F*2))-7
40 COARSE=INT(AUDF/256)
50 FINE=INT((AUDF)-(256*COARSE)+0.5)
60 ? CHR$(125)
70 ? "THE DESIRED FREQ IS ";F
72 ?
75 ? "THE TWO INTERMEDIATE FREQS ARE:"
80 ? "        COARSE= ";COARSE
85 ? "          FINE= ";FINE
87 ?
88 ?
90 PITCH=1789790/(2*(256*COARSE+FINE+7))
100 ? "THESE TWO FREQS RESULT IN A"
105 ? "PRECISION FREQ OF ";PITCH
110 ?
115 ?
130 ? "PRESS START TO PERFORM ANOTHER "
132 ?"CALCULATION"
133 ?
134 ?
140 ? "PRESS OPTION TO HEAR THE TONE"
142 ? "GENERATED BY THE LAST CALCULATIONS"
145 X=PEEK(53279)
147 IF X=7 THEN 145
148 IF X=6 THEN GOTO 5
149 IF X=3 THEN GOTO 200
200 ? CHR$(125)
210 POKE 53761:REM SET VOICE 0 OFF
211 POKE 53763:REM SET VOICE 1 OFF
220 POKE 53768,80:REM SELECT THE CLOCK FREQ,
AND JOIN VOICE 0 AND 1
230 POKE  53761,160:POKE  53763,168:REM  SET
DIST. AND VOL.:REM TURN UP VOL.
235 POKE 752,1:REM TURN OFF CURSOR
240 POSITION 4,8
241 ? "FREQUENCY HEARD IS "; PITCH
260 POKE 53760,FINE:REM POKE VOICE 0
270 POKE 53762,COARSE:REM POKE VOICE 1
280 FOR X=1 TO 500:NEXT X:REM PLAY TONE  FOR
A TIME
290 POKE 53761,160:REM TURN OFF VOICE 0
291 POKE 53763,160:REM TURN OFF VOICE 1
295 GOTO 5:REM START OVER
```

The locations to poke for the other two voices can be found in "Mapping the Atari". This is pretty heavy stuff, so go slowly.

LIGHTNING PROTECTION

-- Brad Piatt --

Lightning causes potentially damaging voltage spikes on power and telephone lines. When lightning struck near my home, I did some research on the best and most economical way to protect my computer equipment. The very best method of protecting your equipment is to unplug the system and disconnect it from the phone line when it is not in use. When your computer is in use it can be protected from lightning surges on power and phone lines very econically with the following system.

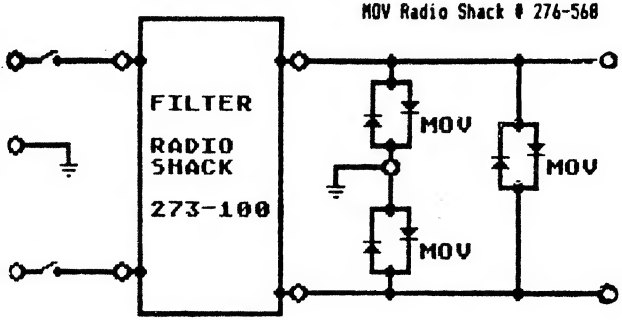
First, I installed a McGraw-Edison surge arrestor (AS260B) in my breaker box. (Follow the instructions in the box or call an electrician.) The arrestor takes care of the heavy stuff.

Next, I modified a power strip to provide surge protection and filtering. The drawing below details the hookup. The double-pole switch provides complete isolation of the system when it is not in use. The filter reduces the level of any spikes on the line and eliminates any radio interference on the power line. Place a 5 Amp fuse before the filter; the fuse will blow and alert you if the MOV's fail and reduce your protection.

The MOV's (metal oxide varistors) are the heart of the system. The electrical resistance of the MOV's change as the power line voltage increases. If the line voltage goes above 130 volts, the MOV's "short out" the transient. By absorbing the transients, the MOV's protect your equipment. Your phone line can be protected using a similar array of MOV's. Place one MOV across the line from tip to ring and one MOV from each conductor to ground.

The parts are readily available at your local Radio Shack. I think this system provides greater protection than expensive "surge protectors" at less than 10% of the cost.

MOV Radio Shack # 276-568



POWER STRIP FILTER

Programs

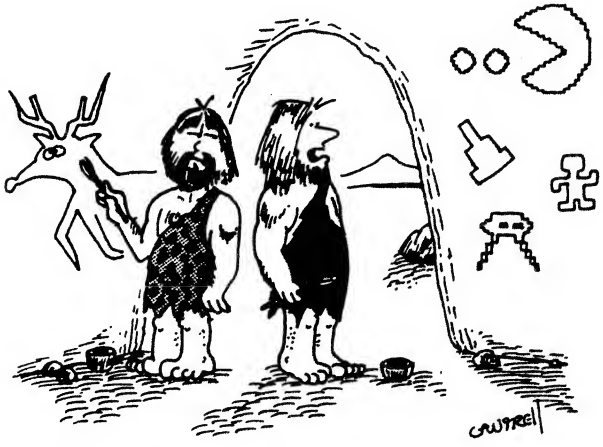
VORTEX

by Mark Price - SBACE

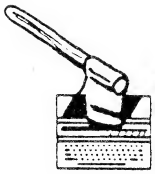
Vortex creates a hypnotic pattern on the screen. The picture seems to be going away from you as it tries to draw you into the TV screen. Just type it in and RUN.

You are feeling very, very sleepy...

```
10 REM *** VORTEX ***
12 REM *** BY MARK PRICE - SBACE ***
200 GRAPHICS 23:SETCOLOR 4,6,4
210 FOR I=1536 TO 1565:READ J:POKE I,J:NEXT I
212 REM *** INSTALL DLI ROUTINE ***
220 J=PEEK(560)+256*PEEK(561)
222 REM *** SET DLI FLAGS ON ALL DISPLAY LINES
230 POKE J+3,205
240 FOR I=J+6 TO J+99:POKE I,141:NEXT I
250 POKE 512,0:POKE 513,6:POKE 54286,192
252 REM *** ENABLE THE DLI ROUTINE ***
299 REM *** PLOT CONTROL ***
300 COLOR 1:GOSUB 400:REM *** PLOT X ON
310 COLOR 0:GOSUB 400:GOTO 300
312 REM *** PLOT X OFF AND CYCLE BACK ***
399 REM *** PLOT CYCLE
400 POKE 77,128:FOR I=79 TO 0 STEP -1
410 PLOT 80,47:DRAWTO 159-I,1
420 PLOT 79,48:DRAWTO I,95
430 PLOT 79,47:DRAWTO I,1
440 PLOT 80,48:DRAWTO 159-I,95
450 NEXT I:RETURN
499 REM *** DATA FOR DLI ***
500 DATA 72,173,11,212,201,63,144,9
510 DATA 173,0,210,101,20,208,7,240
520 DATA 5,173,0,210,229,20,141,10
530 DATA 212,141,22,208,104,64
```



"GEE, MY WIFE DOESN'T LIKE THEM, EITHER. MAYBE I'M JUST AHEAD OF MY TIME."

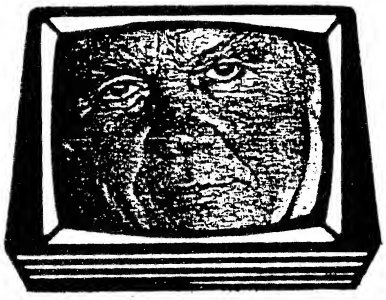


Last Hacks

A Comment from Andy

A Parody of "A Few Moments with Andy Rooney"

J'ever notice all the fuss everyone is making over computers these days? It seems you can't go anywhere with out hearing "home computer this" or "personal computer that". Why is that? What's so great about computers, anyway?



J'ever notice everyone says "you need a computer" or "nine out of ten homes will soon have a computer"? Why do I need a computer? And why will nine in ten homes have one? Is the government going to pass a law or something? Right now, the only one on my block that has one is seventeen years old, weighs ninety-eight pounds, wears glasses and has acne. He is a "NERD". J'ever notice how popular NERDS have become? Why is that? Maybe because they have computers, which are popular too. If I buy a computer will I become popular? Or will I become a NERD?

J'ever notice there are "home" computers and there are "personal" computers? Why is that? Are they the same or are they different? Can you use a home computer outside your home? Do you have to keep a personal computer to yourself, or can you share it with friends? There are also "LAP-TOP" computers. Are they for people who can't afford a desk?

J'ever notice people who use computers are called "HACKERS"? Just what is a hacker, anyway? To me, it sounds like someone you wouldn't want to meet in a dark alley. When I think of HACKER I think of Jason in "Friday the 13th". He hacked people with a large knife and lived in the woods. Did he have a computer? Was it a "FOREST" computer?

J'ever notice if a computer is easy to understand it is called "USER FRIENDLY"? Why is that? Does that mean that easy to understand is the same as friendly? If Jason comes up to me and says, "I'm going to hack you up with my knife", I can sure UNDERSTAND him, but I don't think he is very FRIENDLY. Why is that?

My friend, the Nerd, once told me, "My computer speaks BASIC, FORTRAN, and LISP." I don't know about BASIC and FORTRAN, but if his computer has a LISP, why doesn't he take it to a speech therapist? Come to think of it, the Nerd has a lisp, too.

J'ever notice all those computer commercials on TV? Alan Alda showed how easy to understand an ATARI computer is. Atari must be "friendly". William Shatner presses a button on a Commodore computer and he disintegrates! Commodore doesn't sound very friendly to me. Maybe Jason has one. Charlie Chaplin does a commercial for IBM. Why is that? I mean, he was born in the 1800's. They didn't even have computers then.

And finally, j'ever notice how stupid they name computers nowadays? They used to call them ENIAC or UNIVAC. I could relate to that. But, now they are called things like Apples or Oranges or Apricots. When I eat apricots I get the runs. If I use an Apricot computer will I get the runs? Then you've got the TI 99/4A. What the heck is a 99/4A anyway? Isn't that Dolly Parton's size? The Nerd has a TRS 80. But, he calls it a TRASH 80. If it was trash why did he buy it in the first place? Do only Nerds buy TRASH 80's?

Well, that about does it for now. J'ever notice how many times I say "J'ever notice"? Why is that? J'ever notice I always say "Why is that"? Why is that?

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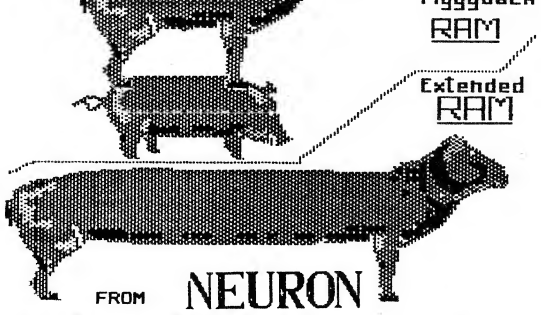
Atari Anonymous of Rhode Island User Group

January 1986 AUSTIN ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS



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Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Sionis	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	Barry Schroeder	627-6708
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430

OTHER CLUBS

The following list is provided for owners of non-Atari computers:

CLUB	COMPUTER	CONTACT	
Apple LUG	Apple	Gary Martin	394-0115
CCUG	Color Comp	Dale Knepper	626-6917
CMARC	Ama.Radio	Bill Hineman	323-2914
COMP KLUB	Texas Ins.	John Hayes	882-7860
DECUS	DEC	C.M. Watson	483-1111
DRUG	DEC Rainbow	Jeff Weihl	349-6967
Epson Users	Epson	Ted Bozarth	332-3710
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MID MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

august 1986

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Atari News

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by Gigi Bisson - Antic Online
6/24/86

INDUS IS OUT- Prospective Indus disk drive owners be warned; the Chatsworth, CA-based peripherals manufacturer is no longer in business. A company called National Logic took over the new Indus MIDI sequencer product line, and Future Systems, Inc. purchased the rights to the Indus GT Atari and Commodore-compatible floppy disk driveline.

Future Systems has notified registered Indus owners that their Indus warranties are no longer valid. A service contract can be purchased from Future Systems for $24.95.

According to Future Systems President Gary Grewal, the company intends to release several products Indus had in the works before the reorganization, including a CPM/BIOS RAM charger that plugs into existing disk drives. The new address is: Future Systems, 9811 Owensmouth, Suite 9, Chatsworth, CA 91311. (818)407-1647.

MIRAGE FILES CHAPTER 11:- Mirage Concepts, makers of the H & D Base database and other ST products in the Holmes & Duckworth Micronomists software line, have filed for Chapter11 protection.

Due to their inability to fulfill a $175,000 business loan, their bank "physically appropriated the company's assets on May 21", Mirage Vice President Michael Reinhold said in a prepared statement mailed to creditors. As their Fresno, CA offices have been shut down, company officials were not available for comment.

Southern Bell/AT&T traced the offending calls and ordered the anti-Fawell Atarian to cease and desist, threatening to discontinue his telephone service. (Credit for this morsel of Atari trivia goes to the Jersey Atari Computer Group newsletter.)

REMOTE CONTROL PETSTERS?- Nolan Bushnell, Atari Inc. founder,and current President of Axlon Inc., the company responsible for Petsers, those adorable fur-covered robots, is rumored to be considering a merger with Steve Wozniak's CL-9 company. Axlon would acquire Woz's remote control interface venture in a stock swap that would involve no cash. Teddy Ruxpin, watch out.

MORE PEOPLE USING ATARIS- Judith Cohn is conducting Cell Image Analysis research at NASA with the aid of an Atari ST computer and the DEGAS graphics program from Batteries Included. Cohn is currently writing an ST program which she hopes will help her partition digitial images of human reticulocytes (individual cells which form a network of cellular tissue in the human body) into two groups.

FREE TEACHER PUBLICITY- Trying to sell your product to the education market? Put it aboard the Teacher Resource and Computer Training Center, a roving computer "mobile unit" equipped with Atari ST and Apple II computers, textbooks, software, comfortable couches and, of course, hot coffee. The mobile unit cruises the parking lots of 25 school districts in the Wayne-Finger Lakes area of upstate New York, giving 2700 teachers hands-on experience with educational software and computers.

To get your Atari ST educational product on the bus, send a complimentary sample of software conspicuously marked with the name and address of your sales representative, to: J.C. Crawford, Wayne-Finger Lakes Area Teacher Resource and Computer Training Center, 3501 County Road 20, Stanley, NY 14561 (716)526-6431.

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The Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine is an independent newsletter published by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and is not affiliated in any way with Atari Corporation. Atari, the Fuji symbol and the names of various Atari computer equipment are trademarks of Atari Corporation.

This publication is the official newsletter of the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, an independent user group of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of C.H.A.O.S. members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of C.H.A.O.S.

Other user groups are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from members are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS, or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (see below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of both newsletters and disk libraries are welcomed. Exchange newsletters and terms for disk library exchange should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Atari News

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WHICH WILL YOU BUY?- This Christmas, Commodore will sell the re-designed Commodore 64 for $200 while Atari Corp. delivers the 65XE for under

$100.

LUNA RELEASES ATARITEL- One of the hot items that made lots of press and drew curious crowds at last month's Chicago CES show was the rebirth of the VIDEO TELEPHONE. A nifty little device that drives either a built in 2 inch black and white screen or an full size monitor, it sends "stills" every 30 seconds or so, using a 5 second blast of data on a normal phone line. You can keep talking too. The surprize is that it is the ATARITEL system, which was sold to MITSUBISHI when Warner gave up to Tramell. Megabucks of ATARI money went into the "failure" but now it may actually be a big success. Price: about $1,000 a unit (you need at least 2!) ATARI would probably have sold them at less than half that... or tried to.

ACTIVISION/INFOCOM MERGE- Activision, the Mountain View, CA entertainment software company, has reached an agreement to merge with Infocom, the Cambridge, Mass. interactive fiction game developer.

Activision Chairman and Chief Executive Officer James Levy said that Activision will exchange 2.0 million shares of Activision common stock, valued at $7.5 million, for all outstanding shares of Infocom stock.

Infocom will maintain separate product development and marketing operations in Cambridge.

Activision has also recently acquired Gamestar, creator of Championship Golf, and GBA Championship Basketball, two ST games slated for Fall release; and Creative Software, a

productivity software company. Activision was founded in 1979 when five dissatified employees left Atari Inc. to form their own VCS game cartridge company.

ATARI MORALITY- A man in Georgia reportedly programmed his Atari 800 and modem to call the Jerry Falwell toll-free fund collection number every 38 seconds. Apparently he was attempting to prevent the Moral Majority from getting tax-free contributions which, the computerist contended in an interview with Cable News Network, is, itself, immoral.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the newsletter, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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MEETINGS

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Astronomy-Physics Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.

S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE

East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

PIRACY

Piracy and illegal copying of software is not condoned by C.H.A.O.S. nor allowed at any club sponsored function or activity.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Leo Sell

Well dear, it's time to leave for vacation.

But I still have to write my column for the newsletter.

Oh, that can wait. We have to go.

But I haven't even started, and it was due a week ago.

We are not going to hold up our vacation so you can do some more computer work.

Honey, I have to do the column. I aoso need to finish that program I've been working on.

I'm warning you...

It'll only take me a little while.

The kids are already in the car, ready to go.

Just a little longer.

OK, that's it!

(5 minutes later)

Hi honey, what's the hammer for? Gonna hang a picture or something?

Hey!! What are you doing?!!

No! Don't hit the computer with that!!

No! No!...I'll go, I'll...

THE NEW ALADDIN
A Capsule Review

by Leo Sell

Those of you at the July meeting saw a demonstration of one of the most unique products ever for the Atari. A complete magazine - on disk - no paper involved at all. The premier issue contained 3 sides full of articles, stories, reviews and more. Including some of the best graphics work ever seen on the Atari 8 bit computer. There is a lot to this magazine. If you want to see it for yourself, it will be demo'd again at the August meeting. A more complete review will appear in the next issue of the newsletter, along with instructions on subscribing if you don't make it to the meeting.

Review

MIDI ON THE ATARI
By MITCHELL WELLS

I have been asked to write a few short articles about MIDI (an acronym for Musical Instrument to Ditital Interface) and its use on the ATARI. Rather than describe or explain MIDI here, I will instead tell you fellow ATARI enthusiasts about what to look for in the future of MIDI on ATARI's. However, in later articles I will expand on MIDI; I will tell you what it is and what it does in detail. For now, just know that it is a way for computers to play synthesizers and for synthesizers to communicate with computers.

If the future of MIDI on ATARI's was in any way reflected at the NAMM show (National Association of Musical Merchandisers) in Chicago the weekend of 6/14, the best that can be said is that there will be a future, albeit a slow moving one. The NAMM show in question is where all the manufacturers of musical equipment meet to display their wares to retail outlets like Elderly Instruments (where, by the way, I work), who in turn make orders based on what they see. Although the ATARI was seriously overshadowed by the IBM, APPLE and COMMODORE 64 (NOT the AMIGA), some new developments in software for the ATARI may make it a frontrunner in the race for the most popular MIDI computer within a year and a half. There was very little new in terms of MIDI software for the ST computer, which I saw as a disapointment as it's the only computer that comes with MIDI ports already on it.

HYBRID ARTS did not have MIDITRACK ST done yet, and EASYTRACK ST was about as useful to a musician as ACTIVISION's THE MUSIC SHOP (which is not very and if you own an ST and are thinking about a MIDI software package for a serious musician, stay away from both of these). However, if you're not a musician and want something that will be easy to use with a CASIO CZ 101, I would suggest ACTIVISION's package. It's much cheaper and easier to use. HYBRID ARTS did unveil an 8 voice sampler (sound digitizer--more on samplers later) which is made to be hard wired to an ST. There was some great software for it, and it did have its uses, but it also had tremendous drawbacks for a real MIDI system (no MIDI thru port, the need of another MIDI keyboard as a trigger, so on). They did have a good MIRAGE sampler editor and a generic system dump program however, which they also have produced for the 8 bit ATARI's.

Besides HYBRID ARTS, KAWAI, which has made fine pianos for many years, unveiled a new line of synthesizers. These synthesizers will come with software editing packages for the ATARI 8-bit machines ONLY. They're fine synthesizers with fine software. When I asked why KAWAI decided to go with the ATARI rather than the more popular COMMODORES, APPLES or IBMS, KAWAI said they thought the ATARI's were better computers for the money and that the ST's were shaping up to be THE MIDI computer in Europe! I had also heard this from two other sources (Musician Magizine last month and Electronic Musician from two months ago).

Next month I will talk about my own ATARI-based MIDI system and just exactly what this MIDIbusiness is! Until then, if you have any direct questions, reach me, Mitch Wells, at Elderly Instruments on North Washington in Lansing any day except Tuesday.

SECRETARY/TREASURERS REPORT
By GARY FERRIS

Another month, another meeting. Again slow due to normal summer months and tempuratures in the 90's, about 50 people came to swaet with us anyway.

At the July general meeting we were treated to an excellent demo of MIDI software for the 8-bit Atari by Mitch Wells. The software demod was Miditrack III by Hybrid Arts for the 130 XE or 256k XL's. If I had an ounce of musical talent, I'd have had my checkbook out on the spot. VERY IMPRESSIVE.

Leo Sell demod a new magazine on a disk called ALADDIN. It comes as a three disk set bimonthly and will be demod again in August in case you missed July's meeting. If you subscribe the club will receive a $5 rebate which would help us continue our level of services to the membership.

Malcolm Cleveland showed us the Samsung amber monitor which he purchased at the recent computer show.

Guy Hurt reviewed the premier issue of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine and sprung a suprise quiz ont the members. Fortunately no one was injured in the ensuing panic which followed.

John Nagy did his normal top notch job with the disk of the month, which we have all come to expect. Many thanks for a job well done.

The balance in the treasury stands at $563.30

Atari Technical

ST BOOKSHELF ON A LASER DISK
by NAT FRIEDLAND, AnticEditor

The Atari exhibit at theChicago CES in June was packing them in to see something genuinely new --the 540 megabyte CD ROM system (Compact Disk, Read Only Memory) running on the 520ST computer.

Software by the Activenture Corp. of Monterey, California put the 26-volume Grolier Encyclopedia on a CD ROM disk-- along with a smart database that finds all references for any word in the encyclopedia in three seconds flat.

This system will be premiered only with Atari STcomputers. Atari is committed to release a CD ROM player -- targeted to retail at $599 -- by the end of the year. Grolier will probably price the CD ROM encyclopedia disk at around $150-200.

HOW COMPATIBLE?

How different is CD ROM from standard digital audio disk technology? Could you use CD ROM on any compact disk player?

"No, it's not 100% compatible with digital audio. But the idea is to keep down CD ROM costs by using as much as possible of the CD audio technology," said Rolander. "And there is a universal CD ROM standard that has been accepted by Philips, Sony, Hitachi and all the other major manufacturers involved in the field. So there won't be any problems with competing formats."

Similarities between CD ROM and CD audio include the same 4.75" disk size, with identical mastering and duplicating processes. This keeps expenses low. It costs no more than $4,000 to make a master disk for pressing. The cost for pressing 1,000 disks is $4 apiece.

All CD players share the same principles of laser optics, the same motor and drive specifications. However, CD ROM requires greater precision in mechanically positioning the laser head and mirror.

Also, CD ROM needs a higher degree of error correction accuracy. It uses 10 to the minus 12th power -- meaning you might get a typographical error once in a trillion times. This is accomplished by adding 288 bytes of error correction code onto every data "block" of 2,048 bytes. An unformatted CD ROM disk could actually store 600 megabytes.

"CD ROM needs these more precise tolerances because you cannot have the two-or-three bit error factor that's acceptable for compact disk audio reproduction," said Rolander. Accordingly, he wouldn't be surprised if top-of-the-line CD ROM players also include audiodisk capability in the near future.

WHAT'S ON TAPE

"Any text that's stored on magnetic tape can be machine read and automatically indexed by our software," said Rolander. This immediately brought up the question of how much reference material was now available on magnetic tape.

His answer was that just about all printed matter of any substance that has been published within the past five years could be found on tape. That's because the largest state-of-the-art typesetting machines, such as the CompuGraphic 8600 and the top-line Mergenthaler model, normally keep the text data on electronic tape.

"Also there are the huge libraries of information already processed electronically for online databases," Rolander added. "A surprising amount of this material is in public domain, often because it has been prepared by the government."

Rolander sees Activenture as an "optical typesetter. "Paid by royalty fees, Activenture offers the service of creating a fast, interactive index for existing reference material and databases. When Rolander isn't hurrying to finalize his software in time for Atari's September deadline, he's flying East to meet with traditional publishers and sew up more CD ROM rights.

HOW IT'S DONE

The CD ROM disk has four different sections. First is the raw data -- which is nothing more than all of the encyclopedia, from A to Z. Then comes the index, or table, which contains pointers to all unique words in the encyclopedia. Next is the directory, which is similar to the file management sectors of a floppy disk. It tells the program where to find a file on the disk.

Finally, there is the Facts and Figures software, which loads into the computer and runs the show. At this writing, Rolander was uncertain whether this section would be on the CDROM or on a separate floppy disk. It depended on whether Atari made the CD ROM Player a self-booting peripheral.

All the Activenture CD ROM software was programmed entirely in the C language. After Rolander wrote his minicomputer indexing

program, it took the VAX nomore than six hours to read the approximately 58 million characters in the Grolier Encyclopedia and create the index table.

The program counted the number of unique words at just around 141,000. Some 30 "stop words" -- including but, a, and, of, the, etc. -- were ignored in the index.

At the same time, the unique words were also alphabetized and every one of their locations in the encyclopedia was mapped. One reason for the lightning speed of the Facts and Figures software is that it searches references in the index, not in the encyclopedia.

Interestingly, the fully mapped index takes up 50 megabytes, almost as long as the 58 megabytes of the encyclopedia itself. However, the entire encyclopedia and index only require one-fifth of a standard compact disk!

The encyclopedia text files must be usable with video monitors that have different resolution formats. So the software formats the text in real time as it is going into display.

"To keep the program moving fast, it calls up very large buffers," said Rolander. "Infact, it will use whatever free memory is available. "The storage buffer requires a minimum of 64K, and the Facts and Figures software will also need its own 64K of RAM.

Transfer rate of the CD ROM is 150 kilobytes per second. An important design element of the ST, to speed this huge data transfer, is the DMA (Direct Memory Access) chip. And it's no accident the ST has this capability. Rolander and Atari ST hardware designer, Shiraz Shivji, worked closely together, once it was decided the ST would have CD ROM as a peripheral.

CD FILE FORMAT

The format of a standard floppy disk consists of tracks in concentric rings, each consisting of a number of sectors. Optical laserdisks have two standard formats: CAV (Constant Angular Velocity) and CLV (Constant Linear Velocity).

CAV is similar to floppydisk formats. The tracks are concentric rings, each containing a number of sectors -- except the sectors are called "frames" or "blocks." The CAV format wastes a great deal of space. The outside tracks are longer, but they contain the same number of blocks as the shorter inside tracks. However, CAV is easier to program for read-write access, and some laser videoplayers use this method because it permits "freeze-frame."

CLV is a spiral format, much like a phonograph record. All the blocks in CLV are equidistant along one long spiral. So there are three times as many blocks per track at the outer edge as there are towards the center. The CD ROM's 540 megabytes in CLV format are divided into 270,000 blocks, with 2,048 bytes in each block. CLV is the format of CD audio and some video players. Rolander chose the CLV format for his CD ROM system because it permits far more storage.

AND THE FUTURE

We have told our typesetter (the same one since Antic began) never to erase any of the magazine's floppy disk files from now on. It would not be a bad idea to bring out a CD ROM disk containing every issue of Antic. All topics and all listings ever printed in the magazine would be instantly accessible via the CD ROM database.

And while we were at it, we also might as well include every program in the Antic public domain library on the same disk.

Editor's Note

By JEFF BONE

As mentioned last issue, an attempt is being made to solicit other local Atari clubs to participate in our newsletter. So far, the Flint area group shown some real interest and may be participating as early as the next issue. Other groups are beginning to respond as well.

This means more pages will be added to accomdate their needs (also to accomodate the additional knowledge to be shared). We can actually grow to over a 50 page ALL-ATARI monthy if this co-operation grows to include more clubs.

Perhaps, if we unite, The industry will be forced to realize that support for the Atari machine is legitimate and strong. You're darn right we should unite. After all, we do speak the same language...

Special thanks to those people who wrote articles for this issue. The information contained in them is top-notch. Perhaps, because of these articles, someone else may save time, money, and get 100% out of their hardware/software. Once again, thanks for your support. Now, don't the rest of you who didn't write an article feel fired up?

Till next, I'll see you in the main loop...

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
By JOHN BAKER

It's finally finished! I know, some people said it couldn't be done, wouldn't be done, at least in their lifetime, but it's staring you in the face. What am I talking about? Why the new C.H.A.O.S. Library disk files listing of course!

Because of the many changes, not only in the number of disks that we now have to offer, but also because of the new category subsections, many of you may not be aware of what is actually available to you. Many, many new files have been added, even completely new entire disks. Old, stale and outdated material has been removed. Once you familiarize yourself with the new listing, we feel that looking for that certain file or disk will be a much easier task.

One of the first and foremost things you get with your library disk is quality. Every disk contains only the best available program versions in each category. These files are found to offer the most value for size/time considerations. We have done all of the hard work for you, adding proper doc files, testing, selection, etc.

The library is just one of the many benefits available to club members. You make its existence possible, so be sure to take advantage of the wealth of information it offers you.

The Disk of the Month subscription is still the best way to get the freshest, hottest new 8-bit programs for your Atari. And at only $50.00 per year for 14 disks, it is an exceptional value.

Summer time is traditionally a slow time for the library, as well as the club in general. Be assured that although the tempo has slowed for the season, the internal workings of the club are as active as ever. Expect new and exciting things as a C.H.A.O.S. member

I would like to take a minute to express my thanks to the many users groups that are currently exchanging software with us. If your group or club is interested in a software exchange, either large or small, please contact me with your software listing and exchange conditions. For fastest results, contact me direct at: John Baker, 15371 Chandler Rd., Bath, MI 48808.

Review

THE LAST V8 - MASTERTRONIC
By Rob Doell

The other day I was walking through one of the only stores that still carries Atari, Toys R Us. I came across a game called "The Last V8" by Mastertronic Inc. It had an appealing cover and a little caption near the bottom that said "Features Superb Voice Synthesis". I flipped the colorful package over and looked at six pictures of the game screens. I said to myself "Rob, you have got to get this!" There were only 2 of the games left, so I promptly grabbed one and walked to the check-out counter. The game Cost me $9.99+ tax(!). When I got back to my computer I opened the sack and pulled out the game, there was a sticker that had been cut, I put the two halves together and it read... "Mastertronic, Quality tested, Do not accept if seal is broken." I quickly emptied the sack and found no receipt. I had to hope that the game would be good...

I stuck the back side of the disk in since the front was for a C-64, and while it was booting I searched the inside of the game's box for instructions, there were none. I guess I was lucky to receive a disk! The Game looked neat, but nothing compared to the package screens. At the bottom it said.. "Hit Space bar to Start", I hit the space bar and it said "V8 Return to base", There was some neat sound, but nothing like what I expected. The playing screen is about 3 inches from the top, and that is all scrolling roadways of which are almost impossible to drive the car through. There is a Timer to get to the base, it runs so fast its impossible for me to even get near the base. You have only one life, so stay on the roads, if you even touch some grass your dead. Still There was no voice synthesis. I was very dissapointed.

Three years ago this might have been a neat game, but today it doesn't compare to anything! The game is controlled like Adventure Internationals "Rally Speedway" but not as easy. Even for ten dollars its a rip off. Since all of the other games from MASTRTRONIC cost about the same as this one, and have the same type of packages, I might assume that they too are as bad as this one. (ED. NOTE: Some of MASTERTRONIC's games have gotten raves, too.)

There appears to be no copy protection used on the version I bought.

I might demo the game at this months meeting, and I know that I am going to try this out on a C-64 as soon as possible! Perhaps that's where the voice synthesis is.

On a scale of 1 to 10 I rate the Last V8 a 1.

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Industry Report

PIRACY CONFERENCE ON COMPUSERVE
Reviewed by GARY FERRIS

On June 26, 1986 a conference on software piracy and its effect on users and programmers was held on Compuserve.

Representing the developers were OSS, Batteries Included, MichTron, Kyan, and several others. Antic and Analog had Reps and several users were tuned in.

The conference was started with an introductory statement from each of the developers about their views of the problem.

Mark Skapinker-Dir. Prod. Development
Batteries Included:

The widespread piracy of commercial software is creating an environment in which publishers are losing significant revenue. BI has for the past two years issued most of it's new releases in unprotected form. We consider copy protection to be an inconvenience to honest end-users, no longer meeting the needs of either publishers or consumers.

(An extensive discussion paper written by Micheal Reichman, President of Batteries Included, is available in DL8 for downloading. The file is PIRACY.TXT.)

Tom Hudson-Independent Developer:

As an independent software developer whose sole source of income is sale of my products, the piracy issue is a major concern of mine. The way I see it, there are two types of "pirates" (read thieves). The first type of software thief copies software and documentation and sells it, almost as a business. These are apparantly relatively rare. The type of software thief I am most concerned about is the casual copier who makes a copy for a friend, then that person makes a copy for another friend, ad infinitum. THIS is the copying we need to stop. If we don't, people like me will have to abandon the Atari market because of lack of sales. I will personally make this decision later this year, and I hope I can continue to produce Atari software.

Frank Cohen-Regent Software:

As a developer and user of software and professionally, I oppose copy- protection. As a marketer of software, I find the existence of "hackers" and a very bad history of software piracy upsetting. When I first heard of the ST my reaction was that it could rid Atari of the 8-bit reputation and be looked upon as a business and home productivity tool. Unfortunately, Atari did not present itself firmly or decisively when the ST came out. Many dealers were confused about pricing policy on Atari's ST software. This set an assumption, that ST software is free. It is not. Regent doesn't fear "hackers" or "pirates", it's the attitude that making a copy of software is alright between friends, between a dealer and a customer, or between user group members. For this reason, protection is a necessary first step to correct the "laissez-faire" attitude about our products.

David Duberman-Prod. Manager-Shanner

As we are fairly new in the business, we don't yet have a firm policy on copy protection. None of our software products is copy protected. We include statements with an explanation in our documentation requesting the user not to pirate the software. As for suggestions for stopping piracy, aside from education, I really can't think of a way as long as software is distributed on floppy disks.

John Demar-Pres.-Quantum Microsystems

The piracy problem is simple to understand but difficult to control. Most pirates seem to consider copying software to be as criminal a not stopping completely at a stop sign! What needs to be understood is how widespread the effects of software piracy are. My company is a small group of dedicated people who work 60 or more hours a week to produce the best possible products at the lowest lowest prices possible. We've been pleased with the success of ST-Talk and contribute this to the price/performance ratio it has offered We will keep publishing unprotected software as long as it's profitable and as long as our customers appreciate our efforts!

J. Weaver-Senior Programmer-Factory Programming:

As a long time professional programmer I would estimate that at least half of my potential income (and that of most other program authors) is lost to the effects of software piracy. I deeply resent the fact that so many people take advantage of the unique circumstances of this

industry to rob me and my fellow programmers of the already miniscule royalties we receive for the (average) three to six months of work that goes into each and every program we sell. I feel just as strongly, however, that the solution to software piracy is NOT copy

protection OF ANY KIND. Copy protection only serves to foster a bad attitude on the part of the honest computer user. See text files in DL8 for a full policy statement and CHART (Computer Hobbyists Against Raiders and Thieves) recommended warranty and (c) policy statement.

A long set of exchanges ensued, taking much too much room to repeat it all here. But here's a few of the points made.

All of the developers expressed their feeling that copy protection was not the answer but some felt they had no other option. Some felt education was the way to go. Still others felt that some sort of hardware solution (such as the Paperclip key) was needed.

A valid point was brought up that the numerous ads in Antic and Analog for copy programs and hardware would encourage a number of people to pirate software. The mags responded that the more offensive ones are being removed and others may be after some more consideration.

A user responded that he would not buy copy protected software if there was any alternative and he was fed up with software which didn't run because it thought his double density drive was a pirate drive (Happy,etc).

Perhaps the most alarming thing was the number of developers who said that they may abandon the 8-bit Atari line due to lack of sales.

AND NOW: MY OPINION.

I am extremely annoyed when I walk into a store and find they no longer carry Atari products or they have such a poor selection of software as to make it seem they no longer support us. I was at K-Mart the other day and counted only 13 titles of Atari software. Of these 11 were only there because they were on the back of a Commodore disk.

I asked who was responsible for deciding what software they sold and was told it was an outside warehouse which stocked their shelves. I have yet been able to get a satisfactory answer. I have to assume that they feel the Atari software will not provide the level of sales they require to maintain them in inventory. This may be due to the fact that their are probably several pirate copies for each legitimate copy sold.

Copy protection is not the answer, it only serves to anger the honest user who wants to have a backup for personal use (and should have the right to do so).

I feel that the solution may be in one of two methods.

1) An INFOCOM style sampler disc which allows you to see how a program works, but is not complete enough to be useful. This will take care of the (valid) arguement that you cannot return opened software to most stores and there is a lot of software which you can pay $30-50 only to find it will not meet your needs.

2) Insert a coupon which will allow you to receive a rebate when someone purchases the same piece of software and turns in your coupon. It probably would give the purchaser a discount at the same time. (say $5 or 10% of the purchase price) When you received the check, you would also receive another coupon. This way, instead of giving a bootleg copy away, you would help increase sales (which would encourage more Atari software to be written) and could actually end up with free software in the deal.

If you like these ideas, I encourage you to write to the software companies and express your desire to see one of these methods used.

In conclusion, before accepting that piece of pirated software, think about the effect it may have on future releases. It could well be the last piece of Atari software you will ever see.

How can you participate in a conference on Compuserve? It's easy.

When you log on type GO ATARI8. This gets you into the Atari 8-bit SIG. Conferences are usually advertised in the bulletins which are displayed when you enter. If there is one going on, type CO from the SIG's main menu and you in. If you don't wish to participate but do wish to see what was said, there usually will be a transcript in one of the Data Libraries within a week or two. This will save you connect charges but does not allow you to input your thoughts on the subject.

Telecom

THE DOWNLOAD
By JOHN NAGY

The newly re-written Bulletin Board System software has now been rung out pretty well. We are back to bug free and crash free operation now at 1200/300 baud, with Spartados, BASIC XE, a 256k 800XL (soon to be replaced with a 320K 130XE) and double sided disk drives. The new features made possible by this change will be WONDERFUL. Call us at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours any day.

The new SIGHTS AND SOUNDS message base has gotten unprecedented use- as of this writing it has been available under a month and has had over 300 messages in it! Other changes include turning the sleeping CLUE GAME base into a trivia game base to be hosted by GUY HURT until the fall. Look for more changes coming up.

We get requests online for help getting around on the BBS. It can be pretty cryptic, using code letters to try to do things when you don't even know what the thing is. Lets try to sort out a few things here that apply to using almost any phone-up computer service.

WHY GET ON A BBS?

Good question. Most BBS's offer MESSAGE BASES for exchange of info or just conversation. Often there are divisions in the messages by topic or purpose. At CHAOS, we have a game base, an Ads base, a video and audio base, a place for software info (and upload descriptions), an ST base, and a catchall GENERAL base. Most of the action on most BBS's is in the message bases. But as a new user, the message bases seem very odd and hard to get into. It takes time and experience to really follow a discussion that proceeds by a couple thoughts a day across weeks, but it comes easily.

What most new users want is the DOWNLOADS. These are various programs and texts that the caller can get FREE for the time it takes to transfer them on the phone. Many new users go hog-wild and call all over the country getting mounds of programs, sometimes illegal copyrighted files from "PIRATE BBS's" that come and go. Watch out for these, some are TROJAN HORSES for the FEDS, and the others are just plain criminal. Another word of warning: Most BBS SYSOPS (SYStem OPerators) frown on excessive downloading without similar sharing of your software through UPLOADING. You may find yourself shut out of a system you took too much from, or find you can get at a lot more files after you help them by sending some goodies you found elsewhere. Don't be offended if that great game you send up never shows up on the downlad section... it may have "gone off" that BBS just before you discovered them.

Other features often found on BBS's include various on-line games (adventure or simple arcade), polling on just about any question, and text files on many subjects that can be read, magazine-style, while you are on.

GETTING ON

I will assume (hope) that you have a decent terminal program and at least some documentation for it. The best for the 8-bit machines is the EXPRESS! series from Keith Ledbetter. There are public domain versions for the 1030/835/XM301, the MPP, and all interface-type (including Hayse type) modems. The EXPRESS! programs are available from the club library and are light-years ahead of all other terminal software in ease of use and outright power through features.

Anyway, set your terminal to 8-bit word length, NONE for parity, and ONE STOP BIT (if there is any choice for these items, this is the standard BBS setup. Don't freak if you don't understand these terms- it isn't necessary!). Set your BAUD RATE (again, if you can do it with the modem you are using) for 300 or 1200 baud depending which transmission speed is supported at the BBS (and at your end!). 1200 baud BBS's also will talk to you at 300 baud, so fear not. Also set the TRANSLATION for the BBS you will be using. The choices are ASCII (the standard of all-brand BBS systems) or ATASCII (the special ATARI implementation that allows graphics to be sent along with the text... only on ATARI BBS's.) (Don't miss the 10 great cartoons that randomly open each of your sessions on the CHAOS BBS by being in ASCII!) XE-TERM users: Yes, it DOES have ATASCII available. Press "O" for the options submenu while the main menu is on the screen. Cute, eh, an item important as that with no indication how to get to it?

Notice that many terminal programs will reset the parameters mentioned above EVERY TIME YOU USE THE AUTODIALER DIRECTORY. Be sure the right values for each BBS number are in the directory!

Dial. (However it's done on your setup.) If the BBS isn't busy (it usually is, or else there would be no reason for YOU to call, right? Sort of like a great night spot, if you can get nearby parking, it means there's no reason to go in...) you will be presented with

a "HIT RETURN" prompt, an intro of some sort, or NOTHING but a blank screen. If you get the last one, try a few RETURNS to get its attention.

NOTICE: Atari BBS's decide whether to give you

ATARI Language GRAPHICS or not based on the RETURN you send. Be in ATASCII when you hit return, else you will be treated like "one of the OTHER guys".

Sooner or later, you will be asked for your name or password. If asked for a password and you dont have one, do what it says to get one. Most are free and are granted immediatly at your first call, although many systems will grant you only limited access until they check to see if you are some axe-toting Jason type. This is why they ask for phone numbers... If you really live at the number you give, you must not be totally screwy. (Many sysops really do check, and won't validate you if you have something odd about your application.)

Some systems have a "second password" of sorts to veryify who you are... On the CHAOS BBS, you first give your password, then the system asks for you to finish your phone number... odds are pretty good that if you know both, you are really you. It only really makes any difference if you are getting or sending private mail.

ONCE YOU ARE ON

One cardinal rule: READ. This is a TEXT medium, and you MUST master the medium to succeed in it. Day after day I watch some new (and sometimes old) user offered options 1, 2, 3, or 4 on a simple menu, and they choose "B"... YIKE! How can they hope to get anywhere? But they get excited and leave notes about how they ended up somewhere they didn't want to be, or that "the BBS screwed up".

A good BBS won't screw up, but there are far more bad BBS's than good ones. You MAY "crash" (knock out of order) a system by giving it unreasonable input or hanging up unannounced. There's a way to do EVERYTHING on every BBS, all you have to do is find it. Most have MENUS that will guide you as you go, or at least have them available if you ask for them. Try a "?" or "H" or "HELP" if you cant figure out what's going on. A RETURN will often cause a fresh menu to arrive to let you know where you are. Play with it. Take notes. Save screens of menus and print them out. The time you take understanding a BBS will pay you back time over time.

DOWNLOADING

How? Not too hard. First, understand that there are at least two standard ways to get a file from a BBS. One is variously called "DISPLAY", "STANDARD", "X-ON/X-OFF", or "ASCII"... this method just dumps the file out to you in one long piece, and expects that you

have a means of collecting it all up (or that you just wanted to see it). This gets very messy if you really want to get it cleanly on disk as a viable program. You can "capture" the file with your software, but the beginning and end of the file are not precisely marked, and you get the full joy of any characters that phone noise (not to mention somebody on the extention!) might add.

The other method normally offered is called "XMODEM" and/or "ERROR FREE TRANSFER PROTOCOL". It sends material in blocks, and checks in with your end to see if each block got through correctly, resending if not. It also automatically saves it all as a file when it is done. This method makes it hard to see what you are getting, but assures no garbage in your file.

To use XMODEM, you first locate a disk that has room on it and a file you want in the download section of the BBS you are connected to. Set up the BBS first... tell it you want to DOWNLOAD (usually with a "D") and follow the prompts carefully to provide a filename in the proper way. No BBS I have called yet has been a mind reader... it can only find a file named EXACTLY what you type, not what you MEANT. Once the BBS finds the file, it will usually ask you which kind of download you want. Choose XMODEM. The BBS will then tell you it is ready to send.

Now you set up your end. You have under a minute to get it ready before the BBS will give up on you, so don't start looking for a disk now. Get to your terminal menu (most use the SELECT button, but you need to know your software), and select whatever is marked "XMODEM RECEIVE" or "DOWNLOAD XMODEM" or whatever. It will then typically ask for a filename, and sometimes for a drive number. Give it what it wants- remember this is YOUR software you are talking to, not the BBS. You DON'T need to save your file under the same name as it is on the BBS- but it may be easier to identify if you do. Once you type it in, it most likely will automatically return to the terminal mode and start the transfer. When it finishes, it will save the file, complete and typically workable, on your disk.

There are a few variations of this scenario, usually due to differences in modem software. Some will require you to set up YOUR end first, then the BBS, then press START to begin the transfer. Others, like the MPP SMARTCART, require chants and rituals known only to a few mystical persons. (Get MPP EXPRESS! and even normal people can use it.)

UPLOADING

This usually works about the same way, but turned around. Again, set up the BBS first, then go into your terminal menu and set up for a file SEND-XMODEM. It should be just as automatic.

Do leave a message about whatever you upload... The SYSOP needs to have an idea of what came up or else it makes his job harder. Plus, why not claim full credit for sending such a gem anyway?

MESSAGES!

Follow the MENUS to get to the message area (BASE) you are interested in. You can usually read messages in a number of ways: forward, reverse, a range of message, or individually. Some systems allow you to read the TITLES of the messages the same ways. This makes it easy to find out if anyone is talking about anything you want to read about, and to get the message numbers.

Leaving a message is pretty straightforward even if it is different on each BBS. You may have to suffer through a long set of questions about what and how you want to leave your message, but the questions are not ususally very cryptic. Eventually you will get to start typing your thoughts. Check your spelling, it's about all people can judge you by online. Don't be abusive- remember the SYSOP has control (AND HAS YOUR PHONE NUMBER!).

You end your message with either a RETURN on a blank line, or on CHAOS and some other BBS's, with a "/S" as the only input on a line. Use the provided editing functions first to clean up the mesage, and NEVER EVER use the CONTROL/ARROW keys to correct anything. The message will be ruined by this attempt, as none of the words are in the same place when you type them as when they will be displayed. On CHAOS, a "/?" gets the editor menu. When you save your first few messages, go back and read them! See if you got it right before you let everyone else read them. You can (almost) always delete it and try again.

GETTING OFF

DON'T hang up. It's rude in person and problematic in automation. Use the GOODBYE, TERMINATE, OFF, LEAVE, or whatever code the BBS has for ending your stay, and stay on til IT hangs up. The BBS takes a while to realize you vanished if you just hang up, and some may have trouble resetting for the next caller.

If you have CALL WAITING on your phone, you will be pleased to know that you will never miss a call... You will be knocked off any BBS

every time you get that "BOOP" tone. This can be very aggravating to both ends of the telecommunication, especially if you are on block 250 of a 256 block file transfer. (Some people have a sixth sense for this, they NEVER call you until you are downloading!). Some limited "protection" from this happening can be had two ways: make your calls to BBS's at times you are unlikely to get calls; or try to "block" the call waiting. This works with variable success, but try it. Call YOUR OWN NUMBER FIRST. You will get a busy, obviously, as someone is using the line... HANG UP AND IMMEDIATELY CALL THE BBS. You will have used up both circuits normally used to get to your number, and until the first one clears (varies from seconds to hours) the second call is "clear". Good luck on this.

I hope this gets you started in the right direction in telecommunication. It can be a great new world of freinds, information, fun, and software, or it can be a confusing thicket of strange symbols and letters. It all depends on IF YOU KNOW THE LANGUAGE. Learn it. It's often close to ENGLISH. And believe me, your english (AND TYPING!) will also improve rapidly with use.

ST

JULY ST-UTTERINGS
BY BRIAN GOLUSKA

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the second Saturday of each month. Meetings are smaller and more informal than the general CHAOS meetings. At the July meeting we had 6 ST owners, 3 people who were thinking about buying ST's, and a couple of others.

Corrections: Last month I said that Mike Clewley brought a 10 Meg Atari hard disk drive. It's really a 20 Meg drive, which Mike again brought to the meeting. This drive is still not generally available, but it does exist. Also, I reviewed Time Bandit, and said that despite a glitch that sometimes crashes the current game, it was the best arcade/adventure game so far for the ST. After more experience, I have to say that it would be the best so far, if it didn't have that very annoying glitch.

This month, Mike brought a clock cartridge from Shanner International, that runs around $40. This plugs into the cartridge slot on the ST, and keeps time and date while the system is powered down, and while the cartridge is unplugged. A program to set the date and time automatically comes with the cartridge. While the cartridge works fine, and meets a real need for the ST, Mike pointed out one drawback: It sticks out too far (a little over 2 inches). It would be better at half the size.

Peter Miller showed the motherboard of his ST, on which he is installing the "piggyback" upgrade to 1 Meg. He talked about the problems of soldering in the small space between the chips, cutting certain traces on the board, and following the documentation. Next month we should know how it went. (Chips for the upgrade from 520K to 1 Meg cost about $35). Which led to some discussion: Should you buy a 520 or a 1040?

1040's are apparently hard to get. 520's, monochrome, are apparently at a good power to dollar ratio. Another consideration may be the built-in double-sided 1040 drive, and built-in power supplies. Some like the 1040 because it has less cables and less power plugs. The 1040 is a more self contained unit. On the other hand, some like outboard power supplies, because the power supply puts no heat into the chips. There is a rumored "520ST Plus", with 1 Meg of memory and separate power supplies and drive that might satisfy us cable-loving heat avoiders. On the other hand, I could be talked into a 1040 if the price was right. (A 1040 was displayed by CHAOS at the May Computer Fair in Lansing, and it certainly was nice, and didn't overheat at all).

Speaking of rumors, I will only speak of the most harmless and unexciting in my articles - I prefer to describe items we have seen and touched. Too many computer rumors tend to reduce credibility of all computer products/decisions. So I'll write a minimum about products that don't exist, although I will mention items like Mike's 20 Meg drive, which physically exists, but may not exist in rumor.

Of course, software is a more important topic than hardware at any CHAOS meeting. A lot of discussion about First Word techniques occurred, and I learned several things, mainly from Mark Smathers. I also learned that anything that is in a FOLDER (directory) that is named \AUTO gets executed when the system is booted. Several people said that \AUTO was in the 520 manual - I still can't find it in mine! But that's what CHAOS meetings are for, to exchange knowledge.

More ST-UTTERINGS next month.

Review

PRINT SHOP and PUBLIC DOMAIN SUPPORT
By Sally Nagy

PRINT SHOP, by Broderbund, $39.95. Additional Graphic Disks, 1,2,3- $19.95.

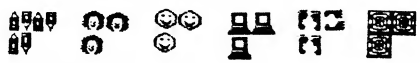
One of the most successful programs ever (of any type!), Print Shop lets you create signs, banners, greeting cards, letterheads or just about anything you like using your dot matrix printer. It comes with a double sided disk, manual and a quick reference card which lists commands, fonts and graphic symbols.

PRINTSHOP includes the GRAPHIC EDITOR lets you modify an existing graphic or create your own. You are limited to the 8 fonts and 9 borders already in the program. Lettering takes solid, outlined or 3-D shaded form. There are 10 abstract background patterns and sixty graphics on the disk. The graphics can be printed in three sizes. You may use the keyboard, joystick or Koala pad with the graphic editor.

SCREEN MAGIC allows you draw text on the screen, create Kaleidoscopes, load, save and print whats on the screen. SCREEN MAGIC is really a separate program from the rest of Print Shop. The original Print Shop graphics, or new graphics created with the Graphic Editor, cannot be saved or displayed in Screen Magic. Likewise, Screen Magic images cannot be used with the other Print Shop features. (Do not be dismayed, PRINT SHOP COMPANION and PSPIC3 help you get more out of this portion of the program. These programs will be covered in more detail in this article.)

PRINT SHOP COMPANION by Broderbund. $32.95.

Print Shop Companion comes with a double sided disk, manual, and reference chart, and is an enhanced graphic editor that is much like the Koala Pad. The editor has 4 screens of functions compared to 1. You can do patterns, mirror, fill, scroll and more. You can load graphics from any graphics disk- your creations or Screen Magic, but only a portion of the screen magic pic file will load. Select from a blinking square over a section of the pic. Edit this portion the way you want it and save it as a Print Shop graphic.



The Border Editor allows you to create new borders. The Companion comes with some new borders but now it's your turn to be creative.

With the Font Editor, you can create the type of Print Style you want. The disk includes some new fonts as well, which can be altered to create your own.

Tile Magic creates an ever changing kalidoscope designs which you can freeze, edit and save to use for backgrounds.

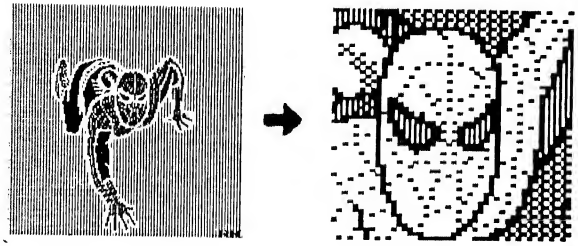
The Creature Maker gets you started creating characters. It divides the screen up into three sections head, body and feet. Change parts of the character, ie. Monkey's head, Clown's body and Gnome's feet. Then you can save it or go to the Graphics editor to finish the picture.

To help you get organized, the calendar function creates a weekly or monthly calendar. Your daily notes can come together with graphics. Print it or just save your calendar to disk.

Reports say that the Companion had problems with the 850 interface. The Broderbund programmer is reportedly working on that bug. Another hassle with these two programs is the constant switching of disks. Otherwise they are great.

GRAPHIC SHOP by C. Jackson and D. May, Antic, sells for $19.95.

Graphic Shop will convert all or part of your favorite Micro illustrator, Computereyes, or Micropainter pictures in graphic files for use with Broderbund's Print Shop. You have the options of converting the whole screen or any section of the screen into a Print Shop graphic.



To convert a portion of the screen you move the small blinking frame with your joystick to the section you wish to use and then press the joystick button. After the picture is converted you then can choose one of four possible options to be saved to your disk.

Note: If the whole screen is compressed, the results may not be acceptable when a finely detailed high resolution picture is used. In such cases, you may wish to convert only a small portion of your picture. Also, you may whish to change certain colors before loading a pic file. Graphic Shop only gives you a two color mode similar to the two-color Print Shop screen. It will substitute black and white pattern fills in place of colors it's unable to represent, and often colors will compress to black producing a very muddy show!

KOALA FULL CONVERT PARTIAL

QUICK PIX by White Lion Software, Post Office Box 357, Ridge, New York 11961. Mail order $29.95 and $2.50 postage.

Quick Pix, according to an ad, is expected to be released in mid-July. Quick Pix allows you emerge your print shop pictures into ATARIWRITER Wordprocessor documents. Check it out and let us know how you like it.

PUBLIC DOMAIN SUPPORT FOR PRINT SHOP

THE PRINT SHOP GRAPHICS LIBRARY UTILITY, by Tom Pazel of Rockaway, New Jersey.

Tom's Print Shop Library Utility does four things: you can print an alphabetic list of the graphic names on any disk; you can rename any graphic on any disk; you can obtain a printout of the actual icons on a disk, twenty per page, alphabetized and with the name under each one; and you can selectively display any graphic. This utility is currently in the C.H.A.O.S. Utility Library as UC17.

Also on UC17 is ARTSHOP by Forrest A. Blood. This program will convert back and forth between Print Shop's Screen Magic files and Datasoft's Micro-Painter (or compatible). ARTSHOP also provides you with a method of manipulating Print Shop data by deleting files, renaming files, listing file names on a printer (differentiating between Print Shop Graphics and Screen Magic), and formating disks in either Print Shop or Micro-painter format.

This program gives some new possibilities: 1) Adding colors and patterns to your Screen Magic files. 2) Superimposing captions onto pictures

you've already created with Micro-Painter. 3) Adding captions to digitized pictures you've stored with Computer Eyes Video acquisition system. 4) Creating colorful title screen sequences for movies you record with your VCR.

On C.H.A.O.S. Utility disk UC14, you will find the following programs:

PSPIC3, as mentioned earlier, allows you can take your favorite Koala Pic, covert it to the 62 sector format, using CONVERT, The Rapid Graphics Converter (also on this disk), and then covert it again using PSPIC3. Once you are done with this conversion you can then load into Print Shop's Screen Magic. Add Print Shop's fancy text to your Pic. You then have the option of saving this new creation. PSPIC3 also gives the option of loading Print Shop Graphic Files and then converting them into a 62 sector Atari pic file. You can have several graphics on one screen which you can save as a 62 sector Atari pic file. There is an option of having an overlay of text or another picture.

SHOPTOOL converts Printshop files to Atari format and vice versa. Displays of any of these two formats and conversions are allowed. Shoptool looks for graphics saved with the .PSF extender. Shoptool creates a 5 sector file which you then can transfer via modem or to friends. This program doesn't check disks for duplicate file names, so be cautious!

CONVERT is the Rapid Graphics Converter (mentioned earlier). This program lets you switch disk formats of picture files created with the 10 most popular commercial graphics programs for Atari. It converts pictures created on the following software: Micro Illustrator(all versions), Micropainter (Datasoft), Fun with Art (Epyx), Paint (Atari or Reston), Visualizer (Maximus), Moviemaker (Reston), Graphics Master (Datasoft), Atarigraphics (Atari) and Graphics Machine (ESI).

PSF1020.DIR is a program to use with your Atari 1020 Plot/Printer. It gives a printed directory of the Print Shop Files on the disk.

SG10PSF.PRT is a program for the SG10 printer that prints the icons on your Print Shop Graphic Disk with the names underneath them. It can be used with most any graphics printer, but the name alignment under the pictures may be off.

CHAOS BBS

CREST

COOKY MONSTER

MC2SHOW

GARFIELD

PICPADX is a converter to Change Printshop Pics to Typesetter Pad Pics. It is written by C.H.A.O.S. member Richard Evans. The opening menu gives you the following options: Print Shop Pic Directory, Atari Directory, Auto-convert (Whole Disk), Convert Individual Pic and Instructions.

Also on UC14 you will find appoximately 20 associated 5 sector PS Files. Use SHOPTOOL to view and convert them.

Another new addition to the CHAOS LIBRARY (not even in the listing, it's so new!) is ICONSHOP, written in ACTION!. It is a graphics editor that is a joy to use. Although its main purpose is as an aid in the creation of Printshop Icons, it also is a fair drawing program. It is as powerful in some ways as the PRINTSHOP COMPANION, and handles very much like the KOALA PAD software, using picture menus to point to.

Iconshop also formats disks in Printshop or DOS 2.0 format, loads & saves files, and converts graphic files between the two formats. All of these features are accessible with the keyboard, mouse, or joystick.

You'll find ICONSHOP in your C.H.A.O.S. library as Utility UC18.

C.H.A.O.S. has 3 disks of Print Shop Graphics Data Files, UE1, UE2, and UE3. These are the files compiled by Jersey Atari Computer Group. SCREEN MAGIC GRAPHICS disks are being created.

More and more utilities and premade graphics are becoming available as each month passes. We will keep you informed as to the growth of our library collection in order to maximize your PRINTSHOP enjoyment.

Please Note that these programs are intended to enhance Broderbunds 'PRINT SHOP' and not to disseminate their copyrighted products, so please distribute original works only!

Review

"NAM" - Reveiwed by JEFF BONE

'NAM" by Strategic Simulations Inc.
(Solitaire Play Only) Retail Price $34.95

Several years ago a game with this title would have been as controversial as the war itself. But, attitudes and public opinion have changed. In fact, there is now great interest in the events, tactics, and campaigns of the war. Of course the game companies were all to eager to exploit this interest into capital gain. Several board games have been released. Now, computer simulation games of this era are arriving in full force.

The first thing that should be said about NAM is that it is a "tactical" combat game. Therefore, it does not simulate any of the political problems that existed at that time. But, if you're looking for action, you got it! From turn one till the end of the game the action is fast and furious.

Upon booting the diskette, you're given a choice of five scenarios to choose from. These five scenarios represent various historical situations that occured throughout the war. Next, you choose the level of diffuculty you wish to play. The computer then asks you to choose a "historical" or "non-historical" set-up for the enemy forces. the historical set-up is obviously the same every time. But, don't think the word non-historical means random, because it doesn't. In fact, there are actually only two different "non-historical" set-ups for each scenario.

The computer then creates the terrain for the scenario being played. Graphics! And they look great. The colors are vibrant without being obnoxious. Good detail, too. You can actually tell the difference between a M113 APC and a M60 MBT (a personnel carrier and a tank to you civilians). A smooth scrolling map is also present.

The next thing you notice is that only your troops are visible. Yup, that's right. The enemy units are "hidden". They will remain so until they are spotted or fire upon your troops. So, you'll have to search for them. My palms are getting sweaty...

Then comes the "Artillery Plot Phase". This allows you to place the cursor anywhere on the screen for indirect bombardment. This is an excellent way of softening up suspected enemy positions.

Next, the "Movement" and "Combat" phases alternate between the computer and the human player.

The final phase awards victory points and asks you if you wish to save the game.

Now, for a note on game design. The game has some interesting play balance features. Since each American unit is superior, they are worth more points (if you lose ONE tank you'll have to destroy FIVE enemy units to break even). To prevent from losing units you will need to rotate your front line troops. Because, every turn a unit does nothing it regains strength. This is very hard to do since 3 out of the 5 scenarios have the Americans on the defensive, out-numbered, and out of position.

Now, some bad news. Helicopters are much too slow in this game. They are only marginally faster than a truck. Yet, they are worth 60% more points. Which makes them "not worth a flying truck"! Also, there are no "innocent civilians" present. So, with superior firepower, you are allowed to lay waste to entire villages with no chance of losing points for "hurting civilians". This is un-realistic. The civilian element in Vietnam was a touchy political situation. Civilian casualties were quickly exploited by the enemy. While allied forces were trying to gain the confidence of the populace.

This game is rated "INTRODUCTORY". This is because the rules are easy to understand and short. But, the complex tactical and strategic decisions that need to be made make it an intermediate game.

WARNING! This game is addictive. Many a night I've found myself surrounded by mosquito netting while wearing my cammies and boonie hat, the "Apocalypse Now" soundtrack played at full volume on the old turntable.

On the Software Report Card, I give this game a B+.

Oh, by the way. If you find yourself surrounded by hundreds of Communist troops, with no hope of escape, you can always press "the button" to end it all...

The reset button, that is...

Squad dismissed!

don't miss the
CHAOS meetings

ST

GETTING YOUR 8-BIT ATARI
TO TALK TO YOUR ST

The following material was taken from the Mar.86 National Capital Atari User's Group and was written by Rick Beetham.

Many new owners of the Atari ST computers have probably come across the problem of transferring files from their old 8-Bit Atari computers. In most cases, getting the ST to talk to their modem was just a matter of purchasing or building a cable, acquiring a terminal package, and then calling up their local BBS. After the initial thrill of getting their ST up and running they probably started to notice that their is still a lot of good software available for their 8 Bit machine. All they have to do is download it... well maybe they will re-connect their 8 bit machine to the modem and call back. Of course that is always the time when they find that elusive ST subroutine that they have been looking for so then they have to disconnect, reconnect their modem to the ST, recall the BBS, then....

And of course, what about the disk subscription you have to Antic magazine? How the heck are you going to get those ST programs off of that 5 1/4" disk? Do you really have to upload all those files to the local BBS with your 8 bit then call back with your ST and download them back onto your 16 bit machine? Sigh.... if only you had bought that 850 interface.... etc.,etc.

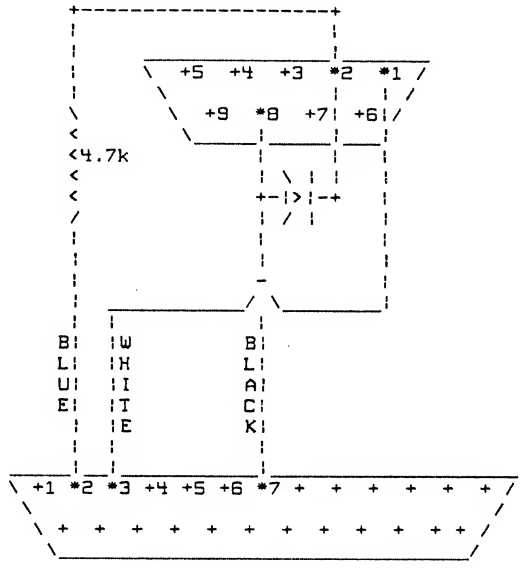
Well, here is an easier way to transfer files and you don't need an 850 interface; or two modems; or a friendly SYSOP in order to do it. The solution is using a null modem cable. The cable gives you a very bare-bones RS232 configuration of a signal ground, a receive data, and a transmit data line. In order to make a null-modem all one has to do is connect the receive data line from the 8 bit to the transmit data line of the 16 bit; likewise the transmit data line from the 8 bit is connected to the receive data line on the 16 bit; signal ground is common to both.

After building the null-modem I then used STTERM2 on my ST and Smartterm 5.0 on my 8 bit. I set both terminals to Xmodem protocol, 1200 baud, ASCII, and half duplex. I successfully transfered several test files from one Atari to the other without fail.

The cost for this cable will be all of about $13, and that is if you buy all your parts new from Radio Shack. If you have an old Atari joystick, you can use the cable from that and save even more.

PARTS LIST:

Atari joystick, plug & cord	- 2761538
Length of 3 strand wire	
Switching diode	- 2761122
4.7k 1/2 watt resistor	- 2718030
25 pin RS232 female connector	- 2761548



Note: Black and White wires
do not Connect

DISK DRIVE BLUES?

Many owners of non-ATARI disk drives are having trouble finding service or repair when their drive has a case of "the punies". Below is a list from Exchange Newsletters across the country which may help...

From the ATARI Federation, Trak drive owners should contact:

Integrated Computer Resources
247 N. Neltnor Blvd., Suite G1F
West Chicago, IL 60185
(312) 231-6104

They will repair and upgrade Trak drives and supply printer cables for the A2-D2 to utilize the built-in 4K buffer.

Percom owners should contact:

STS Computers
1073 W. Broad St.
Falls Church, VA 22046
(730) 237-0558

STS has developed a new operating system ROM. STS engineers are soliciting comments from users concerning firmware bugs in hopes of improving the drives. Schematics are available for $5.

From LAACE, Rana drives are being serviced by:

Nuvotronics
W. Easy St., Suite 5
Simi Valley, CA 93065
(805) 581-3677

Indus drives may soon become a problem too... Future Systems, Inc. purchased the rights to the Indus GT Atari and Commodore-compatible floppy disk driveline and notified registered Indus owners that their Indus warranties are no longer valid. A service contract can be purchased from Future Systems for $24.95. The new address is:

Future Systems
9811 Owensmouth, Suite 9
Chatsworth, CA 91311
(818)407-1647

If you own one of the above drives, file these addresses for future reference.

PACKET RADIO

(reprint: March, 1986 CompUtah)

What is packet radio? It is a system of sending data, text, files, or programs over a radio link using a modified X.25 protocol. The X.25 protocol is a system of blocking the data into no more than 256 character blocks, using ack/nak response, an address field and frame check sequence error checking in some ways similar to Xmodem or Amodem protocol. For those who understand data communications, it is a HDLC format.

One difference is the address portion of the block where you give your call and the call of the stations you are sending to. This field can contain up to 8 destination stations. Another difference is because packet uses one frequency or channel, it is half duplex.

The box which interfaces the computer/terminal to the radio is called the Terminal Node Controller, TNC. The TNC has several different sections. It is a protocol converter. It converts standard async to HDLC and back to async. It has a buffer, usually 16k. It contains a 202 compatible modem, microprocessor and ROM, as well as the hardware necessary to key the transmitter and sense the receiver.

How does it work? Let's go briefly through the process. You type in a message or access a file you wish to send to a friend. When you hit Return, the TNC will wait for the frequency to clear (nobody else using it). Then the TNC transmits a block and waits for a response. If it gets an ack, it will send the next block. If it gets a nak, it will send the same block over. This whole process takes a second or two. Because only the addressed stations respond to each other, several people can be using the same frequency at the same time with no interference with one another.

There are several BBS accessible only via packet radio and operate much the same way as our BBS works. Presently Hams are working on a TNC which will handle several different callers at the same time for a multiuser BBS.

There are some limitations on packet radio. Below 30 MHz we can go only 300 bps, but around the world. On 2 meters, 144 to 148 MHz, the most popular band for packet operations, we can only go 1200 bps. But on the 70cm band, 440 MHz, we can go 19.6k bps.

Now I will tell you the reason for all the addresses. VHF, 2 meters, and higher frequencies only allow line of sight communications. If you can't see it you can't talk.

I can see the top of mount Nebo, so I can talk to someone there. But I can't see Nephi, so I can't talk to Nephi. I can see Provo, and Provo can see Santiquin, and Santiquin can see Nephi. So, if I include the calls, addresses, of stations in all the intervening locations, each one will retransmit my message until it gets to Nephi and returns the response. This may not seem impressive but if you put the intervening stations on mountain tops, as planned, you could communicate with Denver, or maybe even St. Louis going east; or San Jose, Atari headquarters, going west. You must, of course, hold an amateur technician class or higher license to transmit, but anyone can receive.

There is a special bonus this year for packet users. One and possibly two missions of the space shuttle will have a packet system aboard so those interested can send and receive a message from the shuttle. I remember how excited I was in 1983, sitting in line at the bank when I heard, crystal clear, Astonaut Owen Garriott, W5LFL, aboard STS-9 on my handie-talkie with only a rubber duck antenna. This is the real opportunity to engage in the space program as an individual and get started in space communication.

In the near future a satellite will be sent up with a packet system allowing individuals to send up a message, have it stored, and then retrieved by someone on the other side of the earth. An orbiting BBS. Speaking of satellites, there are presently 9 satellites (6 Russian, 2 English, & 1 American) up there for amateurs to use on CW and SSB. This is only the beginning. The future holds real exciting advances in personal/hobby space communications.

The cost of getting into packet is about $300 to $1000 for a radio, antenna, and TNC, assuming you already have a computer or terminal. The cost of equipment to do satellite work is about $1000 to $2500 for 2 radios, antennas, and rotors. A computer is nice to help aim the antennas and to track the orbiting satellite as well as logging contacts.

If you are interested in more information, contact Stephen Lewis at 566-2620, or the Utah Amateur Radio Club HAM Hot Line at 583-3002.

— Stephen Lewis

PS: I wrote this article before the tragedy of the last flight. I think the planned packet experiment will be delayed, but will still take place because NASA still wants to involve the general population in the excitement of space travel and this is one method to aid in accomplishing that goal.

Atari Technical

RAMDISK FOR STANDARD 800XL

A RAMDISK is part of a computer's memory that is treated as if it were another disk drive, Files and programs can be saved to it and loaded to it almost instantaneously. DOS 2.5 is set up to provide users with a nearly full size ramdisk on a 130XE.

You can create a MINI ramdisk on a normal un-upgraded 800XL computer too. There is unused RAM area in the XL that you may have heard about "hiding" under the ROM... it is used by BASIC XE and SPARTADOS and a few other fancy programs, but mostly sits gathering bits. Put it to use to make a 15+K ramdisk by:

1. Boot with DOS 2.5 and normal BASIC
2. Type: POKE 1802, PEEK(1802)+128 [return]
3. Type: DOS [return]
4. Type: L [return] RAMDISK.COM [return]
5. Type: I [return] 8 [return] Y [return]
6. Type: H [return] 8 [return] Y [return]
7. Type: D [return] D8:DOS.SYS [return] Y [return]
8. Type: B [return]
9. Type: POKE 5439,56 [return]
10. Type: DOS [return]

The DOS menu (which is actually the Disk Utilities Package called DUP.SYS) will come up instantly, being loaded from the area of RAM that the computer now thinks is DISK DRIVE #8. You don't even need a disk in drive #1!

You can put anything in your "DRIVE #8" that you could put on a normal drive provided it FITS: you have only a little more than 15K, less after DUP.SYS goes there. BEWARE: copy files from the RAMDISK to a real disk before turning off the computer... because they EVAPORATE when there is no power!

Another good use of the ramdisk is for a MEM.SAV file. Nobody ever uses MEM.SAV because it takes soooooo long... but the idea was good. When you are programming (or anything) in BASIC and want to go to DOS, if there is a MEM.SAV file available, DOS will copy that part of the BASIC file into it to let you go to DOS without losing it. When you return to BASIC, it loads MEM.SAV (your BASIC program) right back into memory. With a RAMDISK, it's almost INSTANTANEOUS.

To make a MEM.SAV, after step 10 above:

11. Type: N [return]

Now you can go to DOS and back, and everything is right where you left it... and nothing ever even MOVED!

COPYRIGHT?
JUST FOLLOW THE STEPS
By JOLENE NORRIS (A.C.E.)

If any of you have written a computer book, a program, or any other computer product and you want to get it copyrighted, it is a very easy task. Remember these points:

1. Print on the work the word "COPYRIGHT" or the copyright symbol -- a circled "C".

2. Inscribe the author's name.

3. Add the year.

4. Write on the product "ALL RIGHTS RESERVED".

Taking these steps will protect the materials developed against unauthorized use by others. These initial steps should be followed by writing for copyright forms to:

Copyright Office
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20559

Also state the kind of article you want copyrighted (computer software, book, etc.). The cost of the copyright for computer programs is $10.00 plus a copy of the program on disk and a printed copy of all documentation.

ATARI TEACHER'S NETWORK
By JIM HERZBERG

All educators using the Atari computer should be members of this local user group for teachers just as all Atari owners should be members of their local users group. I first saw reference to Atari Teacher's Network in the August 1985 issue of A.N.A.L.O.G. magazine. I sent my money in and have received two issues of their quarterly newsletter. The cost is only four dollars ($4) per year.

The last issue contained two pages of letters from Atari users from all over the world; book and program reviews; a summary of Atari LOGO commands; and a catalog of ten disks of education programs in their public domain library. Many of the letters contained requests for assistance or for additional information about Atari computers. Other letters tell how educators are using their computers in the classroom. The worldwide readership gives a new perspective of the brotherhood of Atari owners.

To join the Atari Teacher's Network send four dollars to:

John E. Hanna
Teaneck High School
100 Elizabeth Street
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666

DAS IST DOS

by Leo Sell

For starters, I have a correction from last month's article. DOS option A will not write the directory as a text file on disk. Sorry. I'm afraid I wrote that without trying it first. However, Sally Nagy, after finding my error, compiled a short routine that will read the disk directory and write it out to the disk as a text file (thanks Sally):

```
10  DIM A$(20)
12  DIM B$(1280)
19  REM OPEN DISK DIRECTORY
20  OPEN #1,6,0,"D:*.*"
30  TRAP 80
40  INPUT #1;A$
50  B$(LEN(B$)+1)=A$
60  GOTO 40
80  CLOSE #1:OPEN #1,8,0,"D:DISKDIR"
90  B$(LEN(B$)+1)=" "
100 B$(LEN(B$)+1)=A$
110 M=17
120 FOR N=1 TO LEN(B$)/M
130 PRINT #1,B$((N-1)*M+1,N*M)
140 NEXT N
150 CLOSE #1
```

Sally also suggested a few applications for this sort of program. Writing a discription of each disk file is certainly more handy when you can load a list of files into memory. Another application is a temporary Table of Contents when writing a long work. Use your imagination and enjoy.

Now that that's behind us, let's move ahead. The first two sections that follow are rather closely related: Saving and Loading files, and Common DOS errors.

SAVING/LOADING While this section might be more appropriate as part of a Basic article, I think it's needed here because of common mistakes and misunderstandings.

There are two formats available for saving/loading files. The most common way to store files is the SAVE/LOAD format. The following syntax is used:

```
SAVE "D:FILENAME.BAS"
LOAD "D:FILENAME.BAS"
RUN  "D:FILENAME.BAS"
```

This is the fastest and most common way to save and load a Basic file. LOAD loads the file and waits for a further command such as LIST or RUN. The "RUN D:" format automatically loads and runs the named file. But, there is a hitch (had to be don'tcha know!) If a file already exists in the memory of the computer, and a "LOAD D:" or "RUN D:" command is executed, the file in memory will be replaced. You cannot use LOAD/RUN to enter two files into memory at once.

Merging files in memory is where the other format comes in handy. The LIST/ENTER format has no effect on the program currently in memory, except on line numbers that exist in both programs. You can use this format to save all or part of a file in a way that allows you to merge the lines into another file in memory, or examine the file with your favorite word processor. The syntax is:

```
LIST "D:FILENAME.LST"
LIST "D:FILENAME.LST",LINENUMBER,LINENUMBER
ENTER "D:FILENAME.LST"
```

Listing part of a file gives you the ability to save a particular routine for use in other programs. Avoid line number conflicts though. The computer does not know the difference between lines entered from the keyboard and lines entered from disk. Whatever is entered last takes precedence.

Let me give you an example of using the ENTER command to merge files. Let's pretend that you know you have a timer routine listed to disk numbered from 1000 up, and that you have reserved lines 1000 and up for a timer routine in your present program. With the program you are currently working on in memory, place the disk containing the other file in the disk drive. We'll pretend the file name is TIMER.LST. Type ENTER "D:TIMER.LST" and press Return. When execution is complete, LIST the program. Voila! Lines 1000 and up have been added (or replaced).

Now let's assume that you made some significant improvements to your timer routine and you'd like to save it by itself for another time. You can't use "SAVE D:" because the entire program will be written to disk. The same with "LIST D:". However, you can list to disk and specify the beginning and ending line numbers you wish to include. For instance (pay attention to the placements of the commas):

```
LIST "D:TIMER.LST,1000,1200"
```

Lines 1000-1200, inclusive, are now on disk waiting to be merged another day.

A couple of common errors when saving and loading files should be mentioned. The most common is a missed colon or quotation mark. Another is a misspelled filename or extender. By the way, wild cards are legal when loading files from Basic.

A is to to use extenders to help identify the type of file written. Notice the extenders in our example file names. Convention holds that a "SAVED" Basic file will have a .BAS extender. A "LISTED" file will have either a .LST or .ENT extender.

There is a caveat to saving files. When you SAVE or LIST a file to disk, any file existing on the disk with the file name you use will be replaced, unless the file on the disk is protected.

COMMON DOS ERRORS

There are numerous error messages that you will run into at one time or another. Most are non-fatal. One that is fatal to the program in RAM is entering the DOS command. Doing so will clear memory. Be sure you have saved your file before you enter the DOS command.

The error messages in the Atari operating system (O/S) are a little cryptic, consisting of a 2 or 3 digit error number. The following are some of the most common:

ATTEMPTED ACTION	ERROR #
"LOAD" a "LISTED" file	21
"LOAD" (from Basic) a machine language file (*.OBJ, etc).	21
"ENTER" a "SAVED" file	??
"SAVE" to a protected file name	167
Delete (from DOS) a protected file	167
Rename a protected file	167
Copy to a protected file	167
Attempt to write to or format a write-protected disk	144
Write data without opening file	133
*End of file (EOF) error	136
Nonexistant drive number	160
Disk full	162
Nonexistant file (not found)	170

The end-of-file error marked above, is especially of interest to you telecommunicators. This is a common problem when garbage exists on the end of a file. There are various programs available from the library that will help clean it up and make the file usable. You might also note that some other DOS's are not as susceptible to EOF errors.

Before assuming a file is defective, there are several steps to take. Try them in order. One step or another should load the file, or the combination of steps will verify that the file is bad:

1. "LOAD" the file
2. "ENTER" the file
3. Go to DOS, load from option L
4. Also from DOS, copy (option C) the file to the screen (the syntax is D:FILENAME.EXT,E:)

The first three steps simply help you check or verify the saved format of the file. The fourth verifies it as a good or bad disk file. Copying to the screen successfully indicates that there is garbage at the end of the file.

A HINT OR THREE MORE

A lot of people are a little lost when it comes to loading a machine language file from DOS. Once you do it you'll find it is quite easy.

A machine language file is generally identified with an .OBJ or an .EXE extender. If the disk is supposed to be self-booting, it may even be named AUTORUN.SYS. At times, you may have need to load the machine language file from the DOS menu. To do so, simply type L and press Return. When prompted, respond with the file name (wild cards are legal). Most of the time the file will load and run automatically. There are rare occasions when a file will only load as an AUTORUN.SYS (although some DOS other than 2.0/2.5 will often run the file regardless). If the file doesn't run, try renaming it AUTORUN.SYS, and reboot the disk (be careful of duplicating file names of course).

This brings up another point of interest. To make any machine language program self-booting, put it on a DOS 2.0/2.5 disk and rename the file AUTORUN.SYS. The disk will not boot and run automatically. The other programs on the disk, if any, can be accessed by booting DOS from another disk and then accessing the files.

At times you may want an AUTORUN.SYS program to call another program. Such is the approach on most disks with a Menu program. An AUTORUN.SYS program executes a command like: RUN "D:MENU.*". There is a utility available on the DOS 2.5 disk, as well as several others in the library, that will allow you to custom make an AUTORUN.SYS to suit your needs.

Another matter that seems to confuse people is the printing or the display of documentation (.DOC or text (.TXT) files. Use DOS option C. To print the file, copy to the printer using the following syntax when responding to the from,to prompt:

D:FILENAME.EXT,P:

The file will then rattle off on the printer. One caution, the characters will be sent to the printer exactly as they are. If there are control codes (inverse characters and such) in the file, your printer may go crazy...but only until you turn it off. If this happens you should probably load the file into a word processor and clean it up.

To display a .DOC or a .TXT file on the screen, respond to the prompt with:

D:FILENAME.BAS,E:

E: is the device the computer uses to address the screen. As the text begins to scroll, you can pause it and unpause it using control-1. Press the control-1 combination once to pause, and again to unpause. Easy, huh!!

The last hint regards appending files. Append means to attach to the end of. Sometimes, particularly with machine language files, you need the programs to run consecutively. An example might be the RAMDISK program followed by a terminal program. The biggest confusion seems to be determining which file to copy to when appending. The rule is: copy <u>to</u> the file that should run <u>first</u>.

When people do this, there is always a fear that they will make a mistake and blow away an important file. Well, that's what backups and caution are for. The following steps are what I recommend for safety. I will use the names FILE1.OBJ and FILE2.OBJ to indicate the order in which I want the final product to run:

1. Using option C-Copy D1:FILE1.OBJ,D1:FILE1.TMP
This step writes the file onto the disk a second time under a different name.
2. Append FILE2 to FILE1. Using Option C-Copy D1:FILE2.OBJ,D1:FILE1.TMP/A
There should be no space before the /A. The /A tells DOS to append one file to the other.
3. Rename (option E) FILE1.TMP to AUTORUN.SYS. This will make the program self-booting.

The two files have now been combined and the new file will automatically load and run. If you followed this procedure your original files are intact and you have a third, combined file as well.

Well I hope the articles this month and last have served to diminish some of the confusion surrounding the use of DOS. Those of you that felt that these articles were too basic should remember than I am really simple minded at heart...

Atari Technical

SHARED DRIVES

(reprint: March, 1986 SCAT)

With the prices on 8-bit computers dropping, I have ended up with a number of computers and too few disk drives or printers to go around. I made a cable to connect two computers to one or two disk drives, so two people can play games simultaneously, or to access one disk with two different programs running without reloading programs.

If you want to get more use out of your system, this is how I do it. I do want to warn you, though. I could not find the technical data to know for sure if this hookup is completely compatible, so I make no guarantees. But I have it hooked up and use it with a 130XE and an 800. This hookup has also worked successfully on an 800 and a 400, and on two 800s. The disk drives I have used are an Atari, Indus, and a Rana, both alone and daisy-chained. So far all systems work fine.

You will also have to have two monitors or an antenna switch to view each computer's output. Here's what each cable pin is used for with a 13-pin plug: *1 — Clock In; 2* — Clock Out; *3 — Data In; 4* — Ground; *5 — Data Out; 6* — Ground; *7 — Command; 8* — Motor Control; *9 — Proceed; 10* — 5+v/Ready; *11 — Audio In; 12* — 12+v; *13 — Interrupt.

To make the new cable, use pre-made cables, one 3-foot, the other 6-foot. Cut the 3-foot cable in half, and cut 1.5 feet off the 6-foot cable, leaving 4.5 feet on the other end. Obtain a 2-foot length of 6 conductor cable, and connect one end to each terminal of a DPDT switch. Now mount the switch in a box which will sit in front of your disk drive. You now have one switch with cable attached and 4 plugs with cable attached (only 3 will be used; set aside one plug for parts). Mark the plug with the 4.5 foot length of cable (C) for computer and one 1.5 foot length (C) for the second computer, and another 1.5 foot length (D) for disk.

Take the case off the plug to determine the color of the wires to each pin or use an ohm meter or a continuity checker to determine the color of the wires and make a chart. There is no standard color code, so be careful. Find the 3 wires attached to pin *1 of each plug and splice them together. Continue to splice wires for pins 2*, *3, 4*, *5, 6*, *9 and *13. Now splice the wire from pin 12* of one of the computer plugs to 12* of the disk plug (two wires), and repeat for pin *11. (The 12 volt cannot go from computer to computer, and the audio will sound in both monitors if connected.)

Tape the extra wirres from the other computer cable from pin *11 and 12*. Splice the wire from pin 10* of one computer plug to the wire connected to one corner of the DPDT switch. Repeat for the center tap of the switch to 10* of the drive plug, and repeat for the other wire on the same side of the switch to pin *7. Make sure you don't mix up the wires — the switch should have the configuration in figure 2.

FIGURE 2.

C1	Dr	C2
10*	10*	10*
7*	7*	7*

Now solder all the splices and tape them separately so no splices can touch each other. Then wrap tape around the splices so it makes a neat package. Use a continuity checker or an ohm meter to **CHECK YOUR WORK BEFORE** plugging them back into your computers. This is it; you're done. If the switch points to the opposite computer, just take it out and turn it around without unsoldering any wires.

FIGURE 3.

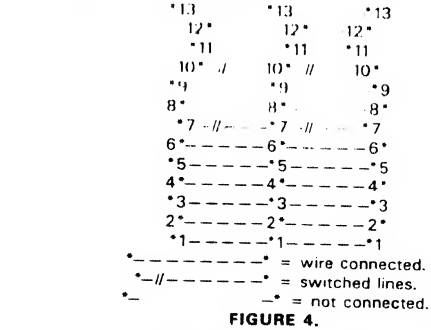
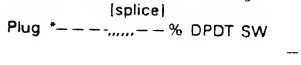


FIGURE 4.



— Roger Brandt

Atari News

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By GIGI BISSON

LINK 255 STS!

ST NET ($149.95) a local area network software package, allows several ST computers share floppy disks, hard disks and printers -- even exchange messages and conversations. Two ST computers can be linked with two standard 5-pin DIN cables (not included). Up to 255 STs can be linked using RJ-11 cables (the same kind used to connect modular telephones) and the ST Net interface boxes ($49.95 each.) Quantum Microsystems, PO Box 179, Liverpool, NY 13088. (315)451-7747.

ST AS SMART EDUCATION TERMINAL

With the CCC MICROHOST minicomputer, up to 128 Atari ST computers can function as smart terminals with 512 colors, high resolution graphics, and mouse, accessing 2,500 hours worth of courseware teachng math skills, reading, spelling and computer science to grades 1-8. Computer Ciriculum Corp., 1070 Arastradeo Road, PO Box 10080, Palo Alto, CA 94304. (800)227-8324.

BURN YOUR OWN

Make Atari ST cartridges to save RAM, disk space and start-up time. The HIPPO EPROM BURNER reads, burns, verifies, copies and edits memory devices such as ROMs, EPROMS, EEPROMS and electrically erasable RAMs. The $139.95 price includes power supply, hardware and software compatible with both color and monochrome models. Hippopotamus Software, 985 University Avenue Suite 12, Los Gatos, CA 95030. (408) 395-3190.

DISK COMPACTOR

The ST SCRUNTCH disk compactor ($14.95) can scruntch down a disk of separate files into a single, compact file. It comes in versions utilizing either GEM or standard Atari command line interface and includes a collection of programmer's disk utilities. Cherry Software, 3415 East 5th, Dayton, OH 45403.

HI RES DIGITIZER

We first saw the PRINT-TECHNIK VIDEO DIGITZER at the Atari show in London, now this hardware digitizer and software package from Germany is making the rounds at American trade shows. The digitizer boasts a resolution of 256 x 256 pixels and 16 levels of gray. To create color graphics, each gray level can be assigned one of 512 ST colors. Or, in the monochrome version, a different black and white pattern or texture can be assigned to each gray level. The digitized images can be modified with ST Doodle, DEGAS or NEOchrome graphics programs. Antic VP Jon Loveless (usually a pretty jaded guy when it comes to computers) was so blown away by the Print Technik digitizer when he first saw one at COMDEX, he actually bought it for his own use. Expected price is around $300. Print-Technik, Nikolaistr 2, 8000 Munchen 40, 089/368197.

CINEMATIC SOFTWARE

Billed as bringing the sociological predictions of media analyst Marshall McLuhan to life, the first interactive movie software, CINEMAWARE was unveiled at the Spring CES in Chicago. Mindscape's Cinemaware software line is really a collection of interactive graphic computer games with cinematic themes. They employ cinematic techniques such as tilts, pans, closeups, reverse agles and 360 degree turns and are accompanied by original soundtracks. One game will have over a megabyte of graphics information alone. Mindscape goes so far as saying Cinemaware "will interest ordinary people in computers." Now this we have to see. Mindscape, 3444 Dundee Rd. Northbrook, IL 60062 (312)480-7667.

SIDEKICK CLONES INVADE ST DESKTOP

We interrupt this game to announce -- you have a lunch meeting! Helpmate, yet another Sidekick-style desk accessory for the ST, has a neat gimick -- an alarm appointment calendar. At the date and time of the appointment, any GEM based application will be interrupted and an alarm will sound before a message announces the appointment. Royal Software, 2160 West 11th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97402 (503) 683-5361.

SIDECAR, yet another "SideClone" desk top organizer, includes calculator, calendar, notepad, address book, ASCII table to calculate the hex and decimal values of any recalled character and "Mini ST DOS" -- a program that lets you perform DOS commands such as copy, delete, rename without returning to the ST desktop. Works in all ST graphic resolutions. Migraph, 720 s. 333rd. Federal Way, WA 98003 (206)838-4677.

Last Hacks

NEW COMPUTER HEALTH HAZARD CLAIMED
by Trendy Woodz - SLCC 4/86

Medical researchers today announced a major new study that implicates computers in yet another health hazard - excessive weight gain. Dr. Nathan Feelgood of the Institute for Advanced Obesity in Orson Wells, Nevada, said that computer programming was linked to weight gain in virtually all of his tests.

"In our animal studies, we found a strong connection between computer usage and weight gain. Rats in a control group that was kept away from computers showed no appreciable weight gain for the length of the study. Offered a variety of foods, they chose a diet of fresh fruits, green and yellow vegetables, alfalfa sprouts, pasta, goat cheese, mineral water and mesquite-grilled fish or poultry. They also preferred healthy exersize like jogging, tennis or swimming."

"On the other hand, rats who were taught to program computers preferred a diet of pizza, Coca-Cola, TV dinners, Hostess Ding-Dongs, ice cream bars and microwave popcorn. None of them got any exersize, staring at the CRT screen for hours while hunched over the keyboard." This was particuarly true of rats taught assembly language, the so called "hacker" group, he said. (He declined to disclose the actual type of computer used in the study or whether a programming Rat would use a Mouse...)

"All the rats in the programming group showed a significant increase in weight. I think this clearly indicates one of the health hazards associated with computer usage." he concluded.

Feelgood also replied to charges made recently by animal rights groups that he was torturing animals cruelly for crackpot science. "Millions of people have to work with computers every day and nobody complains about it. Millions more listen to rock-and-roll, drink floridated water and eat Wonder Bread and nobody makes a fuss. Yet, they pick on my important work. It makes no sense, no sense at all. Wait until the space aliens land, then they'll be sorry!" said Feelgood.

(Dr. Feelgood is accepting any "rats" that the computing puplic may wish to donate for his experiments. Please use proper packaging techniques when mailing your donation, as the the Doctor has received several "deceased packages" wrapped in Fritos bags, popsicle boxes and bound with electrical tape. It should also be noted that the follwing groups do not fall into the "rats" category: family members, wifes/husbands, mother-in-laws, co-workers, etc. Thanks...Ed.)

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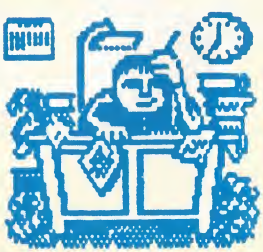

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8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	Barry Schroeder	627-6708
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Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

OTHER CLUBS

The following list is provided for owners of non-Atari computers:

CLUB	COMPUTER	CONTACT	
Apple LUG	Apple	Gary Martin	394-0115
CCUG	Color Comp	Dale Knepper	626-6917
CMARC	Ama.Radio	Bill Hineman	323-2914
COMP KLUB	Texas Ins.	John Hayes	882-7860
DECUS	DEC	C.M. Watson	483-1111
DRUG	DEC Rainbow	Jeff Weihl	349-6967
Epson Users	Epson	Ted Bozarth	332-3710
LACC	Commodore	Jae Walker	351-7062
AMALUG	Mac/Lisa	Chas Winters	787-5731
M3G	All	Warren Wolfe	337-7672
UPCO	IBM/Comp.	Skip Osterhus	321-3425

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Atari News

ICD is now making SPARTADOS in a CARTRIDGE for the 8-bit ATARI. No more disk space gone to DOS, or load time wasted! It will be a STACKABLE cart like their RT8 time cart... Imagine SPARTDOS, RT8, and BASIC XE, all stacked up on top of an upgraded XL... You might have to move your monitor!

Closer to home, MICHIGAN COMPUTER SHOWS has announced another COMPUTER SHOW in the CLARION HOTEL in Lansing for Sunday, October 19. Area clubs and vendors from several states will be there, with over 15,000 square feet of show area. Discount tickets are available for club pre-ticket sales. Call (517) 487-5646.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY's Computer Lab is also hosting a MICROS UNLIMITED computer show (no sales) at the MSU Union Building on the 7th and 8th of November. The purpose of the show is to increase awareness of the potential and uses of computers. (517) 353-1800.

A text reader for use with almost any computer is now under $200. OMNI-READER plugs into any RS-232 port and can optically scan printed text and deliver a file readable by word processors. It can cope with fuzzy photocopies and several typestyles. Originally marketed at over $800! (LET US KNOW IF ANYONE TRIES ONE, WE COULD USE ONE FOR THE NEWSLETTER! ED.) OMNI-READER, 1-800-722-6013.

Thanks, DAN POORMAN (LANSING STATE JOURNAL computer columnist), for the kind words about MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. Many ATARI newsletters around the country have reprinted a number of our feature articles. And you ain't seen nothin' yet!

FUTURE SYSTEMS (now owners of defunct INDUS) is now selling te long promised RAMCHARGER upgrade for the INDUS disk drives. For $99 you get 64K in side your drive, with a Z-80 CPM computer in it. Your ATARI operating system plays dumb terminal to it. You can run IBM programs on your 8-bit! FUTURE SYSTEMS, (818) 407-1647.

Two California teens are suing ATARI Games Corp. for a MILLION DOLLARS in damages for a "stolen" game concept. Two boys, 14 and 16 years old, claim they sent detailed descriptions of a newspaper-delivery game to ATARI only to have it returned with a letter saying "NOT INTERESTED". Later, after spotting a new game at the arcade called "PAPERBOY" that was so close to their idea, they talked to a lawyer.

OSS Inc. (makers of BASIC XE, the WRITERS TOOL, DOSXL, and other fine products for the ATARI) is again trying their hand at a quarterly newsletter. Last time, it was free and came out ONCE. This time, it will be on a two-sided disk, will include hints and actual programs for use with ACTION!, BASIC XL and XE, etc. This time it will also cost $25 a year (4 issues). Contact OSS, 1121-B Kentwood Avenue, San Jose, CA, 95129-9884.

MEMORY UPGRADES are everywhere now... but who expected one in a CARTRIDGE? RAMCART is a new product of CANOE COMPUTER SERVICES in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Available in 256K, 512K, and ONE MEG, it's a CARTRIDGE for the 8-bit ATARI, and boasts of being the ONLY upgrade that works on ANY machine including the 400 and 600XL. NO INSTALLATION, and full portablility from machine to machine. High claims, even for the $150, $200, and $300 CANOE gets for the three models. We hope to have one for a review shortly. CANOE: (403)486-0166.

ST 3-D GRAPHICS ($24.95) may be the only book available that teaches three dimensional computer-aided-design in C language for the ST, describing such techniques as rotation and shading. Abacus Software, 2201 Kalamazoo SE, PO Box 7211, (616) 241-5510

Make your artwork come to life with MAKE IT MOVE. This $49.95 graphic presentation program is compatible with all popular ST paint programs, creates titles and animation sequences for video recordings, and busiess presentation graphics utilizng zooms, fades, rotations and moving fonts. Avila Associates, 3646 Baker Lane, Lafayette, CA 95459 (415) 284-5982

FEATURE OF THE MONTH: PIRACY

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This publication is the official newsletter of the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and the Genesee Atari Group. Both are independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of C.H.A.O.S. members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other user groups are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request.

Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from members are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS, or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (see below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of both newsletters and disk libraries are welcomed. Exchange newsletters and terms for disk library exchange should be sent to:

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We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

Editor's Notes
by Jeff Bone

This issue marks the beginning of a great co-operative effort among ATARI CLUBS in Michigan. We welcome the GENESEE ATARI GROUP (G.A.G.) to the MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. We expect to add more clubs and more readers in the coming months. The JACKSON Club, C.A.C.E., may be the next to join us next month!

Once again, this month's issue is packed with the latest and best articles on our favorite computer. Every attempt is made to make sure you've got the newest scoop in the Atari world. Thanks to this month's contributors...

NOTICE TO OTHER CLUBS: Many of the articles included in this and every issue of the MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE are available on DL7 of the ATARI SIG on COMPUSERVE. Get them there for reprinting in your publications! Also, please upload your feature article to the DL7, to share with us and others. REMEMBER, UPLOAD TIME IS NOW FREE ON COMPUSERVE.

YES! It's true that there is hope for getting the latest software for the Atari here in Lansing. Recently, while my wife was squandering my paycheck at Sears, I decided to check out their electronic department to see if they had any old software. I had visions of of finding long forgotten adventure games in the bargain bin for $1.98. That was hardly the case. What I found was a decent selection of current titles! Of course, the selection was small but very respectable.

I discovered two games I already own on the shelves. They are "silent Service" and "F-15 Strike Eagle" both by Microprose. I had purchased both of these games last fall. The difference was that the games at Sears could function on either the Atari or Commodore. So, these games had been repackaged for greater marketability. And this is not the first game company to do so.

I've also recently noticed that there many new releases that appear in the Atari language first. This to me is a sign that there is still faith in the Atari machine. A lot of old titles are being converted too. Could the Atari machine actually be getting some respect? Nah...

Till next time, may all your sub-routines return...

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

lansing mi.

We are the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY (otherwise known as CHAOS), serving the ATARI owners of the LANSING area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State Unversity chapter of our organization.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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MEETINGS

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, room 118 Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Michigan State University. Meetings begin at 10:00 AM sharp and last until about 1:00 PM. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of each month. The GENERAL MEETING, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month.

PIRACY

Illegal copying and violation of copyright laws are not condoned by C.H.A.O.S. in any way, nor are these activities allowed at any club sponsored function, nor allowed on the club BBS.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER
By Leo Sell

School has started. Summer is over. Time to renew interest in the ol' Atari!

There are two very important activities coming up in a month or so. One, at the October meeting, is the annual C.H.A.O.S. Auction. As always, you can bring hardware, software (original only please) and etc, and sell it at auction. C.H.A.O.S. receives a 10 percent commission on consigned. We also welcome the donation of items to the Club to be sold for Club fund-raising.

The other event is the Fall computer show. It will be much the same as the show last spring with loads of excitement, bargains, and money saving (spending?) opportunities. The show is scheduled for October 19 and we intend to be there and get the Atari message out. But we need volunteers. People are needed to coordinate our involvement before and during the show, as well as to help with the C.H.A.O.S. tables at the show. Volunteer!!

Some of you may wonder why we emphasize Club money-making so much. Quite frankly, it takes a fair sum to do the kinds of things we now do. The new Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, exists only because we had the liquid funds to start it up. Our BBS is one of the nation's best. Our library is greatly expanding. All of these things take money as well as time. Besides, the treasury never quite gets large enough to send me and my wife to Hawaii!! Aloha...

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ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

C.H.A.O.S. AUGUST 8-BIT MINUTES
By Gary Ferris, Secretary/Treasurer

The 39 person turnout for the August meeting was exceptional considering that it is historically the smallest of the year by far.

The meeting started with a discussion about the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine and the possibility of other clubs associating with us in the magazine. This would enable us to provide more features and help in gaining the attention of Atari and Atari related companies.

Also discussed was the piracy problem and possible solutions. It was stressed that piracy cannot be condoned by the club.

Sally Nagy demoed several of the library utility disks including a Print Shop picture disk and one to convert pictures between the different formats.

Leo Sell demoed the new Alladin 'magazine on a disk' which has some impressive graphics that few thought possible on the 8-bit machines.

John Nagy put together another topnotch Disk of the Month (which we've all come to expect). DOM subscribers will receive the first of two bonus disks next month. Subscriptions are $50 per year and get you the 12 monthly disks plus two bonus disks.

The balance in the treasury stands at $821.10.

ST

AUGUST ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the second Saturday of each month. You don't need to own an ST to attend. In fact, at the August ST SIG meeting there were more people who were thinking about getting ST's than ST owners.

Following up on topics from last meeting, Peter Miller reported that his upgrade of his ST to 1 Meg was working. He said it took more than one try. Besides going over the instructions vs. the finished work again, he said that he found THREE of the piggyback solder joints that looked good but weren't before he was done. I've been in that spot before, when everything should work and it doesn't, then you find each of several problems ONE AT A TIME until you're done. Congratulations to Peter for persevering (and getting an inexpensive upgrade).

Also, in last month's article, I was discouraged with Time Bandit, after giving it a good review earlier (Time Bandit, from MICHTRON, advertised around $40). Mike Clewley, who had also experienced the problem, had further information. He said that in "older ST's", the keyboard processor generates extra interrupts when the joysticks are being used, and if the random value happens to be a "Q", Time Bandit take a "Quit" branch. The old disk and a $5 replacement charge will get us a version of Time Bandit which will work better even on "old" ST's. (Author's note: I've got the oldest ST in town, 13 months. I guess I better get a "new" one).

Another discussion, important to someone considering an ST, is what software might be included in the purchase. This has been confused, since different software disks have been shipped at different times. The most recent purchase anyone knew of included NEOCHROME and 1ST WORD, as well as BASIC and LOGO. Some software products that were previously shipped with an ST, such as DB Master One and ST-TALK, must now be purchased separately. Keep in mind that when Atari shipped software 'free' with certain ST's, this did NOT make the item public domain.

Other things looked at during the August meeting were many new .PIC files for SLIDESHOW viewing, including an interesting animated wave/beach scene, and also CAD 3D from ANTIC. It was generally a low-key meeting, typical of the August lull in activity.

A few days after the meeting, Che Goluska called with news that his new 520 ST had just arrived. He was very pleased that it had the RF (TV) output - it really exists! Che said that low res mode looked pretty good. Medium res mode was not as good, the lack of the TV's capabilities especially evident with a screen full of text. With his ST came 1ST WORD, NEOCHROME, BASIC and LOGO. 1040's are apparently still scarce. Che said that when he was calling for 520 prices, no mail-order place he called had a 1040 in stock/ready to ship.

Like last month, I'll end this with something simple I learned at the meeting. If you change the palette colors, say from BASIC, you don't have to boot the system to return to default colors (black, white, red, green). The CONTROL PANEL desk accessory will reset the default

colors. So if you have software that leaves the screen colors in an undesirable state, just invoke the CONTROL PANEL to return to a readable state.

More ST-ATEMENTS next month.

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
By John Baker

FREE!!!! There is something about that simple word that causes normal sensible people to lose all contact with reality. End cost for products or services becomes oblivious after the realization sinks in that you are going to get something "free". WOW!!! The fact that you bought two stretch limos and a condo in L.A. is immaterial when measured against the knowledge that by making those purchases you got a "FREE" bonus gift.

So with those thoughts in mind, I feel it my duty to inform you that we too are offering free items. Get a grip on yourself! I didn't mean to spring that news on you with so little warning. That's better. Calm down. I guarantee though, that the free items we offer will be much less painful than you might be used to.

Our library disks are filled with quality programs, tested and supplied with documentation. A great buy at $5.00 per disk. But now, to acquaint you with the NEW C.H.A.O.S. library, and the even newer additions, we are giving you a free disk of your choice with the purchase of 4 disks. You also receive a free disk by merely renewing your C.H.A.O.S. membership.

We now have 20 new disks that are not shown on the current library listing. Five of these disks are "PIC" file disks with graphic Koala Pad pictures. Seven are new games disks. Disks in the Utility and Education sections round out the new arrivals. There is so much new stuff that surely you will find programs to pique your interest.

New items are continually added to the library and trades with other users groups are bringing us a wealth of fresh material. Don't miss out. Keep current on whats available to you as a member, and use it to your advantage.

Mail orders for library disks are encouraged. No need to wait for the monthly meeting to pick up those disks you need. Make your checks or money orders out to C.H.A.O.S., include $1.00 for postage for every five disks ordered, and mail with your order directly to me for fastest service.

A LETTER TO THE TAKERS
by Leo Sell

Dear Takers,

This is a difficult letter to write. The sentiments herein could be taken in a negative way - please don't. Please take this as an opportunity for constructive change and a chance to examine your motivation for being involved in our club.

A club such as ours is based on mutual help and sharing of knowledge, experience and resources. Anyone whose involvement is only taking, who doesn't contribute in some way, is tearing at the very fabric of our organization.

An illustration is the difference between 2-wheel drive and 4-wheel drive vehicles. When a 4 wheeler is operating, all 4 wheels are contributing and sharing the road operation. In contrast, when a 2 wheel vehicle operates, 2 wheels are powered and 2 wheels are a drag on the power. The drag isn't much, but it is enough that the 4-wheeler can handle a far greater range of road conditions than the 2-wheeler.

How then are some people a drag on the club? Well, how many times have you seen a demonstration of a library disk, or the disk of the month, and passed up the opportunity to purchase it - instead, asking for and downloading the files from the BBS? How many times have you taken promotional material at a Computer Show or Faire, and not helped with the club's participation? Actions such as these, as well as others, do nothing to support or build up the club. Rather, they serve to weaken it. If everyone takes, rather than gives, the club's existance will cease.

Members must contribute more to the club than just the yearly dues. The annual dues basically cover the cost of the monthly newsletter and the free disk. Support comes in such things as the purchase of library disks, purchase of club-offered hardware, volunteering for needed jobs, etc. Members who are active on the BBS can contribute by downloading public-domain programs from commercial services

such as Compuserve and Delphi, and from other, long-distance Bulletin Board Systems, and then uploading the programs to our BBS to share with everyone. By doing this, the time and cost of expanding and updating our library and supporting the BBS is spread around.

To reitierate, the club must be a mutual and cooperative effort. If it is not, the club will die.

Now, one reaction at this point might be "what do I get out of it??". I will make you a guarantee. Most Atari users want to know more about their machines and how to use them. Getting involved in club activities, such as production of the newsletter, or helping with the libraries, or almost anything, will result in more knowledge and computing ability than you are likely to get in any other way. You always get more out of something when you put something in. You will with our club as well. I guarantee it!!

Please give thought to your involvement in the club. Are you a giver or a taker? We certainly hope that, regardless of past habits, you will share your time and talents and be a giver, not a only a taker. We look forward to your future help, support and cooperation.

Sincerely,
Leo Sell, President
C.H.A.O.S.

THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

Funny thing... the more space we make on the CHAOS BBS, the more we need.

We doubled the disk space a few months back when SPARTADOS allowed us to use double sided disks with the PERCOM MASTER driving two slaves. Then , last month we upgraded a 130XE to 320K for more ramdisk room, adding another 1,000 sectors or so.

And here we are, full again. We continue to carry EVERY AVAILABLE file for the memory upgrades, and that continues to bring us LOTS of national calls. We have a FEATURE each month, where we concentrate on one catagory of file (SEPTEMBER is UTILITIES month). But the more room we have, the more it seems we need to bring you the best programs for your ATARI.

The moral is, I guess, that you need to USE the CHAOS BBS regularly to be sure to get the most out of it. Users regularly find answers to their questions about almost anything ATARI-related through messages on the many bases. And many more users find a lot of good conversation of a NON-COMPUTING nature in the SIGHTS & SOUNDS base, the trivia base, the free UNCLASSIFIED ADS, and the general messages.

You can too... If you have a MODEM, call often! If not, visit a friend and try it. The cost of a modem today can be as low as $20 used and need not cost more than $40 new for a XM-301. It's a very low addmission price to a whole new way of using your ATARI.

HERE'S A FEW HINTS for using the CHAOS BBS. First, don't be discouraged if you get a busy signal! It happens all the time, and is a healthy sign. Put your sytem into auto-redial mode, and wait for IT to call YOU when it gets through. Evenings from 8-midnight are especially busy... all except for TUESDAY NIGHT. I don't understand it, but you can be usually assured a clear shot on any Tuesday. It's the unofficial BBS'ers night off, I guess. Other GOOD times to get through are weekend mid-days, and anytime (except the noon hour) between 10 AM and 5 PM weekdays.

Once you are on, try STACKING commands to save time and eliminate menus you don't need. For instance, if you wanted to get to base #3 and read any new messages that came in since your last call, you COULD press "?" to get the main menu, then choose "M" for message bases menu, then select "3" for the CHAOS LIBRARY, then press "R" for READ MESSAGES at the prompt, then choose "N" for new messages at the next prompt... and finally see the new messages there. OR, a simple "M;3;N" at the main SELECT: prompt would get you to the same place almost instantly! Try different "STACKS" to see what works and what doesn't.

Another point: you stay "in" a message base until and unless you SELECT A DIFFERENT ONE. No need to keep doing "M;3" over and over, just a "E" from the main SELECT gets you into ENTER MESSAGE in the same base you last used. Same to "R"ead messages. Don't bother re-selecting a base until you want a DIFFERENT one. All calls start off "in" base 1, GENERAL MESSAGES. If you don't select any base, thats where you start and end up.

The best help of all is right on-line. Download (or DISPLAY online) the file called "XPRTUSER" for more details on zipping around like a PRO. The CHAOS BBS is available 24 hours a day at (517) 371-1106. C.H.A.O.S. members get higher access.

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Financial Cookbook	$ 28.99
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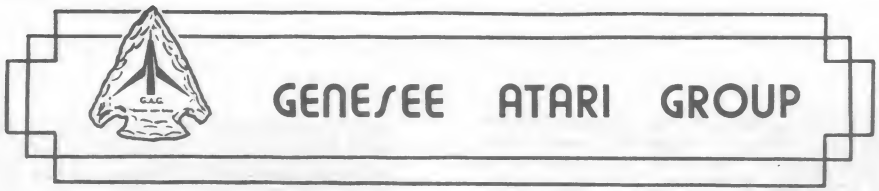


Genesee Atari Group

Jim Steele	President
Gil Merciez	Vice President (ST) & ST Disk Librarian
Matt Howe	Vice President (8 bit)
Jerry Cross	Disk Librarian (8 bit)
Jim Tuma	Disk Librarian (8 bit)

Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint MI 48504

Presidential Mumblings for September '86
by Jim Steele, Genesee Atari Group

I'd like to welcome the members of the Genesee Atari Group to the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. As I said last time, we've decided to join with CHAOS in producing a quality newsletter for the groups in the area. This new format will still let us bring you the local group news, and give you the chance to see what other groups are up to. It also will save us some money by taking advantage of bulk rates and advertising. Let's give it a chance and see how it works.

To the other groups out there, let me take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. The Genesee Atari Group is based in Flint, Michigan and has about 100 members in the Genesee county area. We've been around for about 3 years now.

G.A.G. meets on the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at the NeithercutQ)hool, 2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30pm. We also have a 9:30am 4th Saturday bull session during the school year. If any of you from the other groups are in the area feel free to drop in on the meetings and introduce yourself.

JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL

"A meeting is an affair where the minutes are kept and the hours are lost"

At the July meeting we were treated to a demo of Gil's new CASIO CZ101 synthesiser. Very impressive. Jerry Cross demoed the new Aladdin disk magazine. Personally, I think it's interesting but not a very good value. Lastly, I gave a demo of Atari's new STAR RAIDERS II while Matt Howe showed a little of PLANETARIUM.

In the business area, we decided to participate in the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. We also decided to auction of a software package at the meetings. A few titles were suggested. I'll be following up on this starting in October.

COMMING UP NEXT:

Remember that the officers election is comming up in October. Let's all turn out and vote. As soon as I can get it ready, I'm preparing a membership survey. Every now and then we need to see how well we're doing. When it arrives please take the time to fill it out and send it back or bring it to the meeting.

See you at the meeting. -Jim

JERRY'S PLACE
By Jerry Cross

Clothing....Cocktail Bars....Coffee....

Oh, Hello there. I'm just looking through the phone book. I need help.

You see, Jim asked me to write something about myself for the benefit of the new readers we will have in the new newsletter. I didn't want to, but then he said if I write something I could use my modem and upload it to Johns BBS. OOOOHHHH, I couldn't resist. But after pondering it for awhile, I now realize I'm a modem addict.

Coin Dealers....Compressers....

It all started that day I was smoking in the school's restroom. This nerd named "Tod" walked in and wanted to show me something. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a small modem. He said it wasn't dangerous, so we snuck into the computer room and fired it up. Wow! I ran right out and got one. After a while I needed something more powerfull, so I got a 1200 baud modem. That's when I realized my goal in life was to become a disk librarian. That way I could justify my $100 a month modem habit.

I have been the librarian of the Genesee Atari Group for one year now. I enjoy it very much, and plan to continue to put out the best of the public domain programs I can find. I want to thank the officers of CHAOS for sharing their library with me. We did a lot of disk swapping and I came across lots of great programs I plan to offer to our club in the near future.

Concrete.....Contractors, oops, too far...

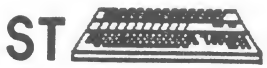
But this problem with modems needs some attention. I was going to install one of those new radio phones in my car, like my friend "Tod". He had his computer hooked up in his car, but I found out he had his license revoked for driving under the influence of modems. I didn't want that to happen to me.

I have been very interested in telecommunications for a few years now. I have played with several different modems, and dozens of terminal and BBS programs. I now run a BBS with a 10-meg hard drive. Please feel free to use it. The number is 313-736-3920. This BBS features lots of text files and over 700 public domain programs.

Now I see they have out these new modems that are even more powerfull and work much faster than anything I have used before. If I don't get help soon I'll be hooked to those 2400's in no time.

Ah, here it is, National Computer Clinic. Maybe they can help me.....

Anyway, I think this new magazine will be a big success, even with this article in it. Good luck to everyone and lets make this one of the most popular newsletters in the country!



ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

Forty seven character columns!!! Can I live with this? Only time will tell as the great experiment begins.

Has GAG lost it's identity, crammed into 4 pages and buried within an alien publication? We think not.

Will Jim Steele's mindless mutterings be muted? Will Matt Howe's spaghetti coded tutorials and etch-a-sketched diagrams cease to befuddle unwary tyro programmers? Will Jerry Cross meet an untimely fate buried under a mountain of disks after tripping over a modem cable? Will someone discover a cork large enough to stop my senseless ramblings? Unfortunately for many, these assaults on your senses will continue.

Additionally, you now are faced with wading through the ponderous musings of Leo Sell, John Nagy, Brian Galuska, and other brave Atarians from CHAOS. And, as I understand, the Jackson Atari group (whatever their name is) will soon be joining this venture to the outer limits of the lunatic fringe.

This should provide a strange introduction of sorts to those unfamiliar with the Genesee Atari Group and their demented spokesmen. I've been impressed with the first couple issues of this magazine and am confident that we here in Flint will benefit greatly from the additional local input that we now have available without sacrificing the national coverage that we have grown used to.

My ST Corner column will resume in October and will concentrate on comments on software, hardware, rumors, and anything else that pops up that might possibly be of interest to the general ST readership. I will also be writing a local column with emphasis on the items that pertain to GAG ST members such as the disk library, upcoming demos, and meetings.

For those who are unfamiliar with me, I have been writing a column of one type or another for the GAG newsletter for almost two long tortuous years. Since purchasing an ST in August 1985, I have restricted myself to strictly 16 bit news, gossip and reviews. My 130XE sits gathering dust in a closet. Mid Michigan beware. I am not known for concise treatises. I see that Brian Goluska of CHAOS has been covering most of the ST happenings in the Lansing area. It should be interesting to see how we view some of the new software as it appears. I'm sure we won't always agree.

Don't forget that original pictures that I choose to use on one of the GAG Library Disks will earn your choice of a free disk. In five months I've had one person take me up on this offer. Pretty pathetic, folks! Everyone has NEO and a mouse. Let's put them to use.

Available at the September meeting in addition to 3 or 4 new disks which I described last month will be a complete listing of the GAG ST Disk Library with descriptions of all the files

on the disks. The library should have 20 different disks by the September meeting at a paltry $4 per disk. It cost me $5.25 for my first 3 1/2 inch disk barely a year ago. It wasn't even formatted!

The Saturday Workshops will begin on the fourth Saturday of September. At the regular September meeting we will discuss how to best utilize these sessions.

ST attendance has been meager at the last few meetings especially considering the growing number of GAG members who now own ST's. We need more ST people to start making things happen. If you have a question, comment, gripe, or are just plain curious, plan to attend. I am currently in the dark as to the sorts of things the members would like covered at the meetings. I would still like to get a Pascal programming Sig off the ground but do not have the time or expertise to organize it. Any volunteers?

As you know the officer elections are coming up in October. If anyone would like to run for either the disk librarian or 16 bit vice president position, I would be more than happy to step aside for new blood. We need more members to become actively involved in the complicated and sometimes bizarre inner workings of the group.

Everyone gets off easy this month...but watch out for October!

VOICEMASTER
Reviewed by Jack Mindy
Reprinted from POKEY PRESS, June 1986

I'll admit I'm a sucker for high-tech gimmicks. Covox, Inc., must have seen me coming when they designed Voicemaster. It's neat, it's fun, it's interesting. It may even have a practical use. Who cares? I'm the first on my block to have a voice recognition system. And even if it's nothing but a toy, Voicemaster does give a look into the future.

Unlike a voice synthesizer (S.A.M., Voicebox, et al.) which CREATES human-sounding speech electronically, Voicemaster records and reproduces your own voice digitally, storing the electronic signals in your computer's memory. The Voicemaster package consists of a small, flat plastic box which holds the electronics, and a lightweight telephone operator-type headset. Cables to connect the pieces to your computer are also included, along with the program disc.

So what can I do?

For starters, put on the headset, boot the demo program on the disk and say a word. You'll hear the computer repeat that word, in your own voice. Unfortunately, this is when you run into a major disappointment with Voicemaster. You'll recognize your voice, all right, but the sound is buried in a raspy, scratchy, static-like noise. We'll have to write off this aspect to price. A truly professional voice digitizer just isn't available yet in this price range.

If your main interest is getting some sort of spoken word from your computer, Voicemaster won't be much of a bargain. From my own experience, Alien Group's Voicebox is an excellent voice synthesizer that's reasonably easy to work with.

However, Voicemaster's strong points are waiting to be discovered. The disc contains a fascinating example of its voice recognition capabilities. You can play Blackjack against the computer, without so much as touching the keyboard or twiddling a joystick. After you recite a list of about twenty words and numbers into the headset microphone, Voicemaster is ready to receive your commands verbally. Tell it how many dollars you want to bet, the "dealer" shuffles the appropriate number of cards to you and "the house". The graphics, though simple, are fast. Tell Voicemaster whether you want another card (hit) or not (stand). The screen shows each card as it is dealt. The "dealer" tells who won, and waits for you to place your next bet - verbally.

Whether or not you're a gambler, you can't help but be intrigued by this new hands-off method of playing cards. And you'll find yourself using the word "neat" a lot.

But Voicemaster is more than a game. The extensive documentation, 50 pages worth (unfortunately on flimsy newsprint-type paper), clearly explains how to add these voice recognition capabilities to your own programs.

The Voicemaster's controlling software uses what Covox calls "wedged in" BASIC commands. Once the machine language program is loaded, 18 commands (19 for the Atari 800) are added to BASIC, for use anywhere in your own program. Commands like LEARN, SPEAK, PAUSE, VOLUME, TRAIN, RECOGnize, SPEED, SCREEN, etc., are very

simple to understand and use. Although the thorough instruction manual seems a bit ponderous at first glance, it is well written in a pleasant, casual style. Learning Voicemaster won't take long at all.

The demonstration program on the Voicemaster disc also contains a number of other voice-operated programs. CALCULATOR will never replace your trusty desk-model Casio, but it's fun to play with. It could probably be worked into a math practice game for the kids. CLOCK will tell you the time in your own voice (raspy though it may be), and even wake you up at the appointed time. But it's not too practical either, since the digital read-out loses about five seconds every time you press the space bar to hear the time spoken. However, the documentation suggests a possible solution for the interested programmer. BARGRAPH displays a number of frequency ranges, showing the relative highs and lows as moving bars on the screen. Whatever the headset microphone hears will appear graphically on your TV. It's fun to watch your voice for a while, but probably doesn't have any programming value.

I've saved the Voicemaster's big bonus for last - the Voice Harp Composer. (The What?) The Voice Harp Composer is what I hoped Music Construction Set would be. Even a person such as I, with absolutely no music training, can hum or whistle into the headset microphone and see his musical notes take shape as they scroll across the screen. With the various one-keypress control functions, aided by a useful help screen, all of the computer's voices can join in, filtered, harmonized, distorted, at your whim. If you hit a wrong note while humming it into memory, a generous selection of edit functions allow you to "hum in" a new note to replace the clinker, or delete it, or insert a rest, or change your eighth note to a quarter note, etc. And a screen dump is provided, so you can print out your own sheet music!

The Voice Harp Composer doesn't play back your whistling or humming; it turns your notes into a real piece of computer music.

Neat!

Voicemaster has two drawbacks. As I mentioned before, the voice playback reproduction is terribly low quality. The output is akin to comparing an Edison cylinder to a modern Compact Disc. The other, more minor, problem comes in voice recognition. When giving verbal commands to Voicemaster, you must remember to pronounce the word the same way you did when it was "learning" that word. If you teach it the word "ee-rase" Voicemaster may not recognize "uh-rase". Similarly, it might mistake "ee-nuff" for "ee-rase". But it doesn't take long to get the hang of it. Much like conversing with a visitor from a foreign country, you must be consistent in your pronunciation and you have to try to look at things from the visitor's frame of reference. Don't worry, you'll get along just fine.

As a matter of fact, this moderate sensitivity to consistent pronunciation might come in handy for foreign language vocabulary drills.

Voicemaster might be a bit disappointing as far as playback goes, but it's like expecting a toy robot to do what Luke Skywalker's buddy, C3PO, could do. Certainly a higher degree of technology is available somewhere, but not for anything near Voicemaster's moderate price. You might dream of a Ferrari, but a Mustang can be a lot of fun, too.
And they throw in the nifty Voice Harp Composer as part of the deal.

Neat!

The above is available from:
Covox, Inc.
675 Conger St., Dept. AC
Eugene, OR 97402
(503) 342-1271

A demo Talking Disk is available for $5.00 and the Complete Package is available for under $90.00. Specify make and model of computer when ordering.

Alternative Dos-Styles
by Leo Sell

Once you are familiar with DOS 2.0/2.5, you may find that you want more power and features. For instance, if you are following our recommendation and using only single density, not the enhanced density of DOS 2.5, you may now want to upgrade to true double-density.

Double-density doubles the amount of information you can place on a disk. The storage capacity is increased from 90k per side to 180k per side. You can then store a lot more files. Double-density is also preferred over enhanced-density because it avoids compatibility problems. Most third-party drives will read/write either single or double density, but not enhanced-density.

Another reason to upgrade DOS's presents itself when you have a mixture of densities in your library - single and double (and hopefully not enhanced). Such a mixture of densities can be confusing and frustrating unless you have a "smart" DOS that is capable of sensing the density of a disk automatically.

Other reasons to upgrade include batch file capabilities, ramdisk support, and RAM-residency.

There are several alternative DOS's that I use. Different ones serve different needs. This section is not a review of those products, but only my own comments and recommendations.

MYDOS - MYDOS is suitable for anyone that wants a "power DOS", while retaining menu-driven convenience. The latest versions of MYDOS are capable of controlling 3.5, 5.25, 8 inch and hard drives. Subdirectories are supported. MYDOS is also density-smart and it supports ANY Ramdisk configuration.

One menu option allows you to customize the MYDOS files to suit your needs. You can change the Ramdisk to any valid drive number, make DUP.SYS RAM-resident so that calling DOS from Basic won't be fatal to your program, turn write-verify on/off, and more. Power, coupled with ease of use, is the byword of MYDOS.

DOSXL - DOSXL is produced by Optimized Systems Software. It is a command-driven DOS. There are no menus, only a prompt such as "D1:". (There is a menu option, but DOSXL is more effective from the command prompt). DOSXL is used by entering commands after the prompt, such as DIR for a directory of files.

There are a number of features that make DOSXL attractive. One is that some people relate better to a command-driven DOS like this one. It is also RAM-resident, so using the DOS command from Basic is not fatal to the program in RAM. Another advantage of DOSXL is that it is not very sensitive to End-Of-File errors. Often, if a downloaded file won't otherwise load, DOSXL will load it. At times, there also seems to be less memory conflict. Sometimes a file that will load, but not run, under another DOS, will load and run under DOSXL. DOSXL supports both batch files and AUTORUN.SYS. There is a version called DOSXLI, that is density-smart. And DOSXL supports many public-domain, ramdisk drivers. All in all, DOSXL is a good DOS to help round things out and solve certain problems.

SPARTADOS - This is the new darling of the Power-Users, and with good reason. It supports most drive configurations (including hard drives), subdirectories, all configurations of ramdisks, and so on. At one time, one version supported batch files, while another supported AUTORUN.SYS. The latest version supports both. It is density-smart, to an extreme. All of this, yet it takes less user-RAM, and therefore has fewer memory conflicts, than almost any other DOS alternative. On top of everything else, if you are a 1050 owner, it is a bargain. SPARTADOS comes as a bonus with the U.S. DOUBLER, the favored product for upgrading the 1050 to true double-density. The only thing to be said against SPARTADOS is a few odd bugs and its potential for incompatibilities. An XL or XE is almost required to use SPARTADOS effectively. It is a real Power-DOS. A more complete review of SPARTADOS is found elsewhere in the magazine. (Next Issue! ED.)

Well, these three are the DOS's I primarily use. They all have their uses. For those of you that want to stay with DOS 2.0/2.5, there are a still a few hints for you. Some of them may work with an alternative DOS, but the following applies mostly to DOS 2.0/2.5.

CUSTOMIZING DOS

There are a few things that you may want to do to "customize" DOS 2.0/2.5. Be sure you do these things on a backup or something other than your original, or your only copy of DOS.

SPEED IT UP - The reason that DOS 2.0/2.5 seems to write so slowly, is because it verifies everything that it writes. Most of the time you don't need to verify writes, so why not turn verification off. Doing so will speed up DOS considerably. Here's how:

1. Boot DOS 2.0/2.5, with Basic in.
2. Type POKE 1913,80 and press Return.
3. Type DOS and press Return.
4. From the DOS menu, use option H to write new DOS files to your disk.

You now have a version of DOS 2.0/2.5 with the write-verify turned off. It's Supercharged!

ADD OR SUBTRACT A DRIVE - DOS 2.0/2.5 is originally configured for a maximum of 2 drives. To increase or decrease the number of drives, do the following:

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AND IV, JAWBREAKER, SURVIVOR
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1. Boot DOS 2.0/2.5 with Basic.
2. Type POKE 1802,X where X equals the following, and press Return:

Nbr of drives	Make X equal to
1	1
2	3
3	7
4	15

3. Type DOS and press Return.
4. From the DOS menu, use option H to write the new DOS files.

Now you can have DOS address the number of drives needed to suit your needs. When memory needs to be conserved, configure for 1 drive. When you need to address more drives, up to 4, configure for that.

A NEW CASE

Normally, you can use only Alpha characters in filenames. Numbers and punctuation are not allowed in DOS 2.0/2.5, although they may be used in other DOS's. This procedure will customize DOS so that you can use upper or lower case and some limited punctuation such as the underline character or right and left brackets:

1. Boot DOS, with Basic active.
2. Type POKE 3818,47:POKE 3822,123, and press Return.
3. Type DOS and press Return.
4. Use DOS option H to rewrite the DOS files to your disk.

The POKEs used instruct the computer to accept ATASCII values between 48 and 123 as valid filename characters.

ON THE WILD SIDE

Wildcard side that is. If you really want to confuse yourself, or someone else, use this procedure to change the value of the wildcard character to something more to your liking (?):

1. Boot DOS with Basic active.
2. Type POKE 3783,X, where X equals the ATASCII value of the new wildcard character. For instance, to change the character to "+", POKE 3783,46. Press Return.
3. Type DOS and press Return.
4. Use DOS option H to write new DOS files to your disk.

A table of ATASCII values is found in Appendix C of the old Atari Basic manual. Have fun with this one!

A HELPFUL HINT

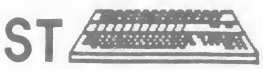
An End-of-File error is usually Error #164. It means that some garbage has gotten into the file. If there isn't a lot of it, you may be able to force DOS to load the file, giving you the opportunity to fix it. First, load your .45... On second thought, try the following:

1. Boot DOS, with Basic active.
2. Type POKE 4148,234:POKE 4149,234
3. LOAD your program from Basic, or DOS option L, as appropriate.

If all works out, you can load the file and clean it up.

INCONCLUSIVELY SPEAKING

This article was supposed to be the third and last in a series. But, more and more comes up, so you're stuck. Next month I will try to have some information about using DOS functions from Basic. Til then....



ST VS. HIGH END 8-BIT COMPUTERS
NO HOLDS BARRED COMPARISON
Excerpted from the ATARI Dealer News

It amazes us that some people will still pay $500 to $1000 for an 8-bit computer system, when for the same price they can get a complete 520ST setup that will outperform any 8-bit machine in every measurable detail.

There are two good examples of overpriced 8-bit systems that are still available in today's marketplace: the APPLE // series and the Commodore 128. Complete with disk drive, the Commodore is less than $100 below the price of a 520ST, while the Apple actually costs much more -- for a more poorly performing product. How can this be?

Inertia.

Both products are coasting on the existing base of their predecessors. The original Apple IC

was first sold in 1977, while the C128 is based on both the C64 (1982) and CP/M (circa 1976). The advantage is that both systems are somewhat compatible with a large software base, and are known entities for institutions like schools. But is this really a good thing?

Both machines are designed around what is essentially outmoded technology. Lets face it, the semiconductor field has advanced quite a bit every year since these machines were developed. Chips can now integrate many more circuits than they could a few years back -- one of the main reasons why ATARI can make the ST system for so little compared to these "toy" computers. At this time it costs less to design a system around the powerful 68000 chip than it did to build around the simple 6502 or Z80 series a few years back.

MICROPROCESSOR: the ST uses a 68000 chip which handles data 32 bits at a time internally and 16 bits at a time externally. The 6502 and Z80 are limited primarily to 8 bits, so they work harder on big operations. Above all this, the 68000 works at 8 million cycles per second compared to 1 or 2 million for the 8-bitters. Not only does it work harder, it does the hard work faster.

BUILT-IN SOFTWARE: the operating systems of the Apple and Commodore are primitive 16K programs compared to the 192K of TOS in the ST. Where the 8-bit systems provide basic input/output functions with a separate DOS, the ST integrates both of these along with graphics features, windowing, menus, and mouse, plus the desktop. The additional programming in the ST makes it easier for users to understand.

MEMORY: the 520SST includes 512K of RAM, where the Apple and the Commodore only provide up to 128K. The ST has big-league capacity for the kinds of problems that you really need a computer for.

VIDEO DISPLAY: the ST gives you 3 modes to choose from, including a special high-resolution monochrome mode of 640 X 400 pixels, perfect for text operations. Both the ST's monitors provide unusually crisp and vivid images that the 8-bit machines can't compete with. This is because the "video shifter" chip in the ST uses the latest in technology and operates at an outstanding 32 million cycles per second.

SOFTWARE: here's why the public perceives an advantage for 8-bitters. They have thousands of packages to choose from today, compared to hundreds on the ST. But numbers alone don't tell the whole story. The kind of software we are seeing on the ST is far beyond the capabilities of the 8-bit systems. Word Processors use the ST's widow environment to provide ease of use that is impossible on the 8-bits -- they don't have the speed or the memory capacity to make it practical. Sophisticated personal and business applications abound on the ST that are completely impossible on the 8-bits. And the rate at which new titles are released for the ST has been far greater than for the 8-bits, so the disparity in the number of titles will disappear very soon.

So, when someone suggests that one of the high-priced 8-bit computers are anything less than relics of a previous age, we just shake our heads and wonder.

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

THE LITTLE COMPUTER THAT COULD...
PART 1
By Richard Barnes

During the past few years, the Atari 8-bit computers as well as a number of other 8-bit computers have been passed over for the glamour and speed of the 16-bit and more recently, the promise of 32-bit home units. These afford higher speed and greater capacity while handling more complex programs.

All the while, the computer manufacturers have tried to convince the public that bigger is better and that the older technology simply can't compare with the new. This higher technology also commands a higher price tag.

Most companies now are not supporting their 8-bit units. This lack of support quickly appears in the software marketplace. Naturally these manufacturers want to be with the most popular equipment, besides if people cannot get new software, they will buy a new machine so that they can remain up to date with the new technology.

When you were children, you probably read a story called "The Little Engine That Could", well the 8-Bit Atari is the Little Computer That Could! The capabilities of this unit are amazing. When you compare this to the price you paid for the equipment then the system is unbeatable.

When someone with an MS-DOS system kids you about having a toy computer, remember, they've spent ten times what you have and probably didn't need the expanded capabilities anyway.

Speed and capacity seem to be the selling points most often addressed. True, the speed can't be matched since the microprocessor is operating at 4.7 or 8 MHz instead of the 1.79 of the Atari, but does this justify such a high increase in price? The standard capacity of the 130XE is only 128K, but this can be increased to 1 Meg through modifications. Once again, not nearly worth the price difference. Most home applications and many business applications do not require the speed or the increased capacity.

For a minimal investment in equipment, the little Atari 8-bit can go almost anywhere the big boys go. You all are familiar with Compuserve and the Source and I'm sure that you've heard of a number of Commercial Databases across the country such as Dialog, BRS, Medlars, Infomaster, etc. You can access any of the above using the Atari 8-bit and a 300 or 1200 baud modem. You only need your password and you're online with the Database. To give you an idea of the information available through these databases, look at the following:

BRS - Over 70 Databases covering a wide range of topics.

Dialog - Over 200 Databases covering a wider range of topics.

Medlars - 18 Databases covering Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Health Administration,etc.

Infomaster - Over 700 Databases including portions of Dialog, BRS, and Medlars.

Although prices vary widely and can range from around $15.00 per hour to $300.00 per hour with a few specialized databases at even higher prices, the average ranges between $40.00 to $50.00 per hour depending on the vendor. A well prepared search strategy can obtain the required results in a matter of minutes at a price of only a few dollars.

The Atari 8-bit with an minimal investment of a disk drive, modem and optional printer can access all of the above data systems. Research work on a subject is pinpointed and can be accomplished in a minimum of time. The readout can be either bibliographic or full text in nature and can also provide the necessary verification for inter-library loans if your library does not have the article.

Infomaster will even ask you questions and then take you to the proper database and run the search for you. You are then billed by the number of topics searched and the number of citations received.

Don't underestimate your little "toy" computer. It has the capability of going where the big boys go and acting as if it belongs there.

Rumors

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE:

We heard that KMART was suing ATARI for breach of contract. The story was that ATARI promised the Michigan-based mass marketer exclusive sales for the 1040 ST, then decided not to sell ANY 1040's through mass market outlets. An injunction was restraining ANY 1040's from being sold in Michigan until it was resolved. ABSOLUTELY NO SUBSTANTIATION of this rumor has been found. ATARI reps and sysops on the ATARI SIG of COMPUSERVE found it to be ...interesting. By the way, more 1040's should be on dealer shelves (even in Michigan) any time now, as production is (supposed to be) up and running.

The MACINTOSH emulator cartridge for the ATARI ST that you heard a lot about a few months ago? It will shortly be available for sale - WITHOUT the APPLE ROM that makes it work. You have to buy that from an APPLE dealer on your own, as APPLE won't sell the chips to other manufacturers. The disk format is different for the MAC as well, so programs will need to transferred from a MAC to be stored on ST format... but that's a one-time hassle.

ATARI is also about to release a VT-100 emulator cartridge for the ST. It will pretend it is a disk directory to your desktop.

The "BLITTER" chip for the ST is nearing release form. Instant text scrolling in BASIC, window so fast you can't see them come or go, etc. are reported by those lucky enough to have seen the development prototypes. Plans now are for TWO different formats for th chip- a one-piece square chip for the new production ST machines, and as a set of SIX NEW ROMS plus the BLITTER for upgrading old units. The ROMS would just plug in, while the BLITTER would be piggybacked on the 68000 CPU.

ATARI now says their 1200 baud direct connect modem will be ready for release by the end of SEPTEMBER. Any bets?

INDUS disk drives are turning on their owners. We have recieved more reports of non-co-operation when attempting use with other brand disk drives. One older model Indus was fine with my PERCOM drive, but two new ones refused to talk to it. Another club member reports that his INDUS was happy with his 1050 online with it until he got a HPPY for his 1050. Now HE is unhappy since the Indus now won't work if the 1050 is plugged in. Are they just tempermental? If we talk to them nice and

buy them premuim disks, will they make up and speak to us again? Any information would be welcome.

Speaking of HAPPYs, HAPPY VERSION 7 is (finally) shipped to all registered owners. The disk-backup system company has drawn a lot of heat for the long promised version 7, and now that it is out, many users are less than thrilled with the "improvements". Version 7 will indeed make copies of protected programs that version 6 could not- but most of the backup programs will be made into a special format ONLY readable on a HAPPY DRIVE. This ought to make the software houses a bit HAPPIER since the stuff can't as easily flow into the pirate market that way, but for those users who want legitimate backups, this scheme has major problems. Consider a PERCOM owner... the PERCOM MUST be drive #1, so a HAPPY would be drive #2... and since the backup will ONLY run on a HAPPY, how do you BOOT off of DRIVE #2? Double YUK.

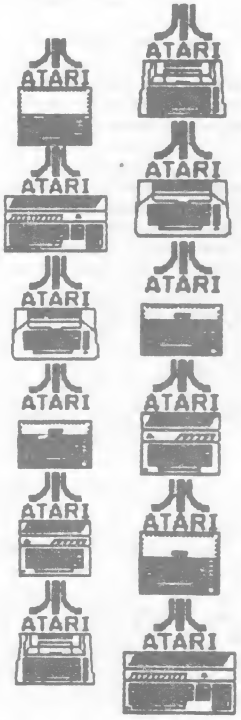
Meanwhile, THE DUPLICATOR (another protected disk backup device) has gotten some TERRIBLE reviews, although MANY of the complaints were explained by the company in a thorough response. It seems that a new software package is now available for it (shades of HAPPY 7) that supposedly now surpasses all other backup systems. There remains suspicion, but THE DUPLICATOR people are sticking to their guns and promising satisfaction. Time will tell.

Telecom

P:R:CONNECTION and AVATEX 1200-
PENTHOUSE PERFORMANCE AT BASEMENT PRICES?
By John Nagy

How much will YOU pay to get into 1200 baud telecommunication? The computer hardware business has always been a race. The PRICE of a product is directly related to the POWER and TIME of availablility. That ATARI 800 you (or somebody, anyway) paid over a THOUSAND DOLLARS for is now outperformed by units well under $100.

Some of us are waiting for the promised $99 1200 baud direct-connect modem ATARI has promised for release ... someday. Others bought a $195 850 interface and slapped on a $500 Hayes modem ages ago. In the middle (finally) are some very attractive options.



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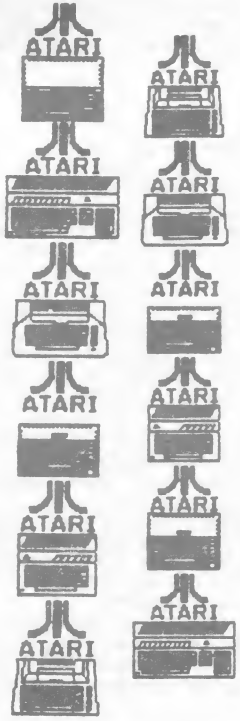

ICD CORP (those inventive folks who brought you the U.S. DOUBLER, SPARTADOS, and are promising the MIO BOX for a MEG of EXTERNAL ramdisk!) is now peddling the P:R: CONNECTION as a replacement for the now rare ATARI 850 series/parallel interface box. It is touted as doing nearly EVERYTHING an 850 does, JUST LIKE an 850 would do it. And it costs under $69, available discounted as low as $49!

At the same time, the AVATEX 1200 modem is appearing in many ads for $89- claiming full HAYES compatibility. Suddenly it looks like the cost of 1200 baud is in reach! IF, that is, these products can perform to satisfaction.

I had the opportunity to find out as the CHAOS BBS changed over to 300/1200 baud a couple of months ago. We already had a real 850 interface, so I was very familiar with its use and performance. We purchased a VOLKSMODEM 12, as it was well promoted and reasonably priced at around $169 at the time. It was NOT a happy combination. Although it was a very nice HAYES type modem, I could NOT get the VOLKS to return to ANSWER mode if a 1200 baud caller hung up. It required a hard reset - turning it off, then back on, to get ready for the next caller. Not willing to sit by the BBS full-time nor wishing to build a computer-driven power relay to keep using it, I begged around to try a few other brands to see if better luck could be borrowed or stolen.

My first shot was a SMARTEAM 1200. It was promoted by KEITH LEDBETTER in the doc for EXPRESS! 850 as being the most fully HAYES COMPATIBLE modem he had seen, and HIS recommendation was good enough for me. Sure enough, it behaved like it was supposed to. It even LOOKED like a HAYES modem, and was also about $170. I did feel that the carrier level was awfully low, causing some long-distance callers to not get a carrier detect. For that reason and because I was certain that the owner of the SMARTEAM was NOT interested in owning a certain VOLKSMODEM 12 that was waiting around for a possible trade, I kept looking.

The Cheap in me cried out to try the bottom of the barrel- The AVATEX 1200 was nearly FREE by comparison to the other HAYES types. I found a club member who was having some trouble setting his AVATEX up (he bought it for $70!) and I promised to see what I could do. We played with it for a whole evening, and found several interesting (and some dissapointing) things.

First, it DID work. But those pretty LED's on the front that look like they are ready to give you all the same information about your connection that a HAYES and the SMARTEAM did? Sorry, they are MOSTLY for the extensive internal test routines. It did finally work pretty well with EXPRESS! 850, although it didn't want to hang up at first. It turns out that making a cable was NOT AT ALL straightforward, as AVATEX has collapsed several RS-232 control lines into one, and dropped others altogether. Fortunately, as of August, 1986, the AVATEX is shipped with a SUPPLEMENT to its manual, and the actual wiring for many common systems is laid out pin-for-pin.

Most disturbing was the 300/1200 baud switch on the front. It must be MANUALLY switched AND the power switch had to be pushed off then on again EVERY TIME you change baud! ICK! Your terminal software ALSO has to be separately switched to match baud rate, else you get nowhere fast. ICK ICK!

Additionally, the command set IS "HAYES TYPE" although the AVATEX has only a subset of those commands. Some nifty things are permanently set for you, others are left out completely. You can't: set number of rings before answer; switch or select the type of command and error echos; go off-line to command mode while connected; set ANY timing parameters for carrier; hear the audio of the line during connect (there's no speaker!).

Now that's a lot to be missing. But honestly, most of that stuff is never used by the hobbyist, or can be certainly worked around. And for the nearly $100 savings, many of us can be persuaded to push a couple buttons to set baud before we place a call. If you are are one of these, the AVATEX is just dandy. Happily, the AVATEX WILL set baud rate automatically if it RECIEVES a call in auto-answer mode. AHA! Lemme borrow it for the BBS.

Thats when I discovered that the result codes from status commands were not the same as a "normal" HAYES-type modem. OOPS! Lets work on that cable some more. I sure wish I had the wiring supplement when I started work on the cable! Here's how it should be wired (for those who STILL are having trouble!):

850/P:R: PIN		MODEM PIN
1	. . . . .	20
2	. . . . .	8
3	. . . . .	2
4	. . . . .	3
5	. . . . .	7
6	. . . . .	6
8	. . . . .	5

Additionally, the lack of online/offline command mode made it touchy for hang-up detection. As soon as the carrier is lost, the modem goes into full-echo command mode. If there is output from the BBS going to the modem, it echos right back, making the BBS beleive it is getting responses to its prompts. This "internal chatting" can go on for HOURS, tying up the phone line if the BBS software doesn't check the closed-modem status for carrier until a period of no input arrives. (Most do it this way to prevent lost characters from the user!) The fix was easy enough, just putting another open modem routine at the problem areas. Before the "loop" gets too far, the open modem forces a check for carrier, and you are back to normal.

The UP side of all this is that after a minimum of twiddle on the BBS software, it was happy as clams running on the cheapest 1200 in town. We haven't had a single modem-related problem in 2 months of testing and now running online, often to the tune of over 50 calls a day. We traded our Volks away to the AVATEX owner, and now HE's happy not to push buttons, and I'm happy not to be crashing.

You may be intrigued to know that the SUPRA 1200 AT and the SUPRA 1200 ST are THE SAME MODEM as the AVATEX, although the AT version has an ATARI 8-bit interface built in. You do not need any other kind of interface with the AT version, although you LOSE control of the DTR (HANG-UP) line, making it almost useless for a BBS (but maybe O.K. for the home). The SUPRA 1200 ST is EXACTLY THE SAME as the AVATEX except for the nameplate, so buy for price... and that probably means the AVATEX.

The SMARTEAM modem came over for testing along with a P:R: CONNECTION, so I got to put it through its paces too.

About the size of a cigarette pack, the P:R: CONNECTION from ICD has 2 serial ports and one parallel port (as compared to the 850 with 4 and one). It uses no power supply, instead, it pulls power from the computer through the daisy chain. This means problems requiring internal mods in a 1200XL, but otherwise works out fine. Not having another power plug to deal with is always nice. But beware: unplugging any part of the daisy chain (the disk drives or whatever) causes a loss of power to the P:R:, often requiring a reboot to reset scrambled instructions! It also seems it MIGHT be a bit delecate... the one I tested died while it was here, although ICD replaced it in about 2 days!

Operationally, it seems to mimic an 850 with great ease. All the handlers and programs I tried on it worked fine, and it convinced the software an 850 was indeed on the wire. I did notice a few minor differences in behavior... A real 850 lets you close the modem and quash the characters left in its output buffer into the twilight zone, while the P:R: CONNECTION holds the channel open a bit longer to allow them to clear. This MIGHT be seen as a feature, as you won't be clipping your output by accident. However, it slows things down a bit more than I like at 1200 baud on the BBS. I prefer to have the control available and settle things in the software, but the casual user won't ever notice this sort of thing.

CONCLUSIONS:

The P:R: CONNECTION is about as good an interface as you will find for the 8-bit ATARI today. The multiple ports are all anyone is every likely to use, and its few non-850like features are hardly a problem for most users. The price makes it a best buy.

The AVATEX (a.k.a. SUPRA) 1200 baud modem is the most modem the money can buy... although the user will have to decide for himself if that's enough modem for HIM. Pressing the baud and power buttons is not much to do to save upwards of $100, but it gets old quick... Be sure you can live with it before you invest.

For a BBS, the AVATEX is a SUPER modem, assuming you can do the little fudging here and there to make it work right with your software. Try it out by calling the CHAOS BBS, (517) 371-1106!

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FEATURE OF THE MONTH

COMPUSERVE's message bases buzzed this month with more news on PIRATES and PIRACY. Here is but a sample, presented thanks to RON KOVACS' ZMAGAZINE August 9, 1986 (excerpted).

HOT News/Rumors 06-Aug-86 16:04:56 Sb: Pirate Zappers Fm: LOYD 76703,207 To: All
6 August, 1986

Twelve of the industry's leading software developers and the Software Publishers Association (SPA) announced today that they have taken direct action by closing down a notorious pirate BBS system located in Cincinnati Ohio. The "Star Chamber" bulletin board system had more than 40 megabytes of Atari 8 bit and ST software,with many hundreds of copyrighted titles available. The twelve publishers, all of whom publish Atari ST software are;

Antic Software Batteries Included Digital Research Hippopotamus Software Infocom Megamax Michtron Procopy Quickview Systems Quantum Microsystems Regent Software Xlent Software

The closing today of a major illegal BBS system through a joint effort of concerned publishers is only the first of several similar actions anticipated. In a joint statement issued by the group a commitment was made to aggressively root out similar law-breakers as they are found. "The days are over when someone can illegally transmit copyrighted software via BBS systems," said Mark Skapinker of Batteries Included. "We're all fed up with tolerating theft of our products and we intend on going after these scoff-laws aggressively," said Gordon Monnier of Michtron.

As a follow-up to this success the companies involved are discussing the creation at fall Comdex 1986 of a permanent watch-dog group to make it clear to pirates that their days are numbered.

The following text is an EDITED set of replies to the above, pros-cons:

Fm: SYSOP*Mike Schoenbach To: LOYD

This made my day! It's fantastic that the software companies worked together to close down a major pirate system. It makes me think that all hope is not lost, and we will rid ourselves of these thieves. My compliments go to all the software companies involved. I hope this is just the beginning!

Fm: SYSOP*R. Brudzynski To: LOYD

Yum! Delicious!
Any idea when the Cincinnati police are going to auction off the thief's equipment? You can get some great bargains at police auctions--puter's, modems, and drives for sale at mere fractions of their original price! Frankly, I think they ought to GIVE the equipment to whoever turned the dope in, but, until they do, I don't mind picking up some bargains!

Fm: Jim Campbell To: SYSOP*R. Brudzynski

Frankly, it seems to me that the equipment is not really in the police's domain. Why does the equipment that they used belong to the police?? If you used your car to illegally transport goods, does the car then belong to the police for them to auction it off? What a joke, and just as wrong as piracy - whether it is 'called' legal or not!!!

Fm: Bill Wilkinson To: Jim Campbell

Not true!!!!! They put the money in general fund and part of general fund is used to prosecute the thieves. I would guess that if a thief wanted to pay all his own prosecution costs he could keep the equipment. Why should _WE_ pay all the costs to send this guy to prison when there is valuable equipment sitting there which can be sold to help pay for it?

Fm: SYSOP*R. Brudzynski To: Jim Campbell

It's the law--and has been for a few hundred years! The federal and most state governments have statutes providing for confiscation of property used in the commission of a crime. What's more--they can keep it even if the alleged malefactor isn't convicted! (He can sue to get it back.)

The laws, ironically, harken back to the days when real pirates sailed the seven seas. After the pirate had been caught, there was always

the problem of what to do with the ship. The pirate had no more use for it--he was usually swinging from the yardarm.

The state doesn't have to confiscate property if it doesn't want to. (It usually doesn't because it's a big headache to manage.) It is, however, a popular practice in drug cases and computer crime. The Federal government regularly sells off a lot of cars, boats, and planes that have been seized with drugs inside. (In fact, CIS has a service which announces some of these auctions.)

In the case of computer crime, the rationale, with which I am in accord, is to take away the little bugger's burglar tools. The punishment is effective and appropriate; selling it at a public auction will help honest users put the equipment to honest use.

I haven't seen any cases where I felt the police were being unfair or arbitrary in their confiscation of computer equipment used in the commission of a computer crime.

I don't think that the police should return burglar tools to the burglars or computers to software thieves.

Fm: Bill Colburn To: LOYD

I can hardly wait to turn in some MAJOR Atari 8 bit pirates in Philadelphia! As a matter of fact, I will put this information where it will do the most good. Thanks for giving me some hope again. I had practically given up on fighting software piracy. Let's get those darn pirates and string them up where they belong.

Fm: GLENN GORMAN To: LOYD

YOU PEOPLE MAKE ME SICK!!!! WHO IS THE REAL PIRATE THE GUY THAT TRIES A PROGRAM AND FINDS THAT IT IS GOOD AND SHARES IT OR THE SOFTWARE COMPANY THAT SELLS CRAPPY SOFTWARE FOR $40.00???? TELL ME WHY I CAN'T TRY A PROGRAM BEFORE HAVE TO FORK OVER THE MONEY????? IF I GO OUT AND SPEND $40.00 FOR A PROGRAM AND IT TURNS OUT TO BE A WASTE OF MY MONEY, WILL THE SOFTWARE COMPANY REFUND MY MONEY????? NO THEY WON'T THEY'LL ONLY TRY TO SELL ME ANOTHER USELESS DISK!!!! MY LIBRARY IS FILLED WITH PROGRAMS THAT I HAVE ONLY PLAYED ONCE. YEA I HAVE HUNDREDS OF USELESS PROGRAMS THAT I HAVE PURCHASED. I ALSO HAVE PROGRAMS THAT I USE EVERYDAY WHICH I WENT OUT AND BOUGHT BECAUSE I FIRST SAW A SO CALLED PIRATED PROGRAM. THE REAL PIRATES ARE THE ONES WHO DO NOT BUY THE ORIGINAL AFTER TRING OUT A COPY.

Fm: SYSOP*R. Brudzynski To: GLENN GORMAN

Geee! I don't have that problem at all! I make it a practice not to shop at stores that won't demo the software for me. I also demand to read the documentation so I'm sure that the software will meet my expectations.

I'm sure that if you follow those two simple rules, you'll experience a lot less aggravation (you may even be able to use lower case letters in messages) and save a lot of hard-earned cash!

Fm: Bill Wilkinson To: GLENN GORMAN

WE will refund your money if you can specifically and clearly show us how the software is worthless. Will we do so just because of a minor bug or limitation? Of course not. Car dealers don't refund your money because the one you got gets 1 MPG less than the EPA estimates.

Still, I do understand your gripe. My answer is one which, unfortunately, is not available to all users. Buy your software at a reputable dealer and then only after you have seen it demonstrated. So few dealers will do demos of $40 software, though, because the profit is eaten up by the demo time. But user groups keep reviews on file, magazines review products (too often not too accurately, but still...), and reviews are certainly a legit use of BBS's and CIS. Your solution is, whether you like it or not, illegal. You -could- end up paying for your choice someday.

-Bill Wilkinson, OSS, Inc.

It went on that way for days... but the overall effect should be sobering to ANY BBS system operator who "shares" the "wealth". Piracy is becoming "declasse", and, like smoking and drugs, may someday be controlled through public awareness and personal responsibility.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH

"I AM A TEENAGE PIRATE"
Special Interview by Ron Kovacs
from Zmagazine August 9, 1986 (excerpted)

The following is the transcript of an interview with the Sysop of the "ATARI CONNECTION" BBS, one that was recently shut down due to piracy. The interview was conducted by RON KOVACS, editor of ZMAGAZINE.

The sysop has asked to keep his name private. His responses are in upper case text. This interview was taken 8-7-86

How long have you been running your BBS?

(Atari Connection Sysop)

WELL, LAST SUMMER I RAN A BBS CALLED THE 800 BBS, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE MUCH SUCCESS WITH IT, I PUT THE ATARI CONNECTION UP ON JUNE 2nd OF THIS YEAR.

(R) Why wasnt your old BBS a success?

(ACS) I THINK BECAUSE OF LACK OF ADVERTISING. BUT I WAS SHARING A PHONE AT THE TIME, AND SO MY HOURS WOULD WERE NOT LONG.

(R) When you had your BBS up, What type of features did you have, and In your opinion what do you think was the cause of your being caught with pirated software, and also, Did you have alot of software in your download section?

(ACS) I DIDN'T HAVE MANY OUT-OF-THE -ORDINARY FEATURES. IT WAS A BASIC BBCS BOARD. BUT I THINK THAT SOMEONE WHO WAS BLACKLISTED ON MY BOARD, PROBABLY REPORTED ME BECAUSE OF IT. AND I DIDN'T HAVE MANY DOWNLOADS AVAILABLE. ALTHOUGH I DO HAVE TWO 1050'S, ONE WAS BEING REPAIRED WHEN I HAD THE BOARD UP. SO AS A SPARE I USED RAMDISK.

(R) Why did you blacklist callers, did they do bad things on your system?

(ACS) ONE PERSON HAD THREE DIFFERENT HANDLES, AND WHEN I FOUND OUT, I BLACKLISTED ALL OF THEM. HE ALSO LEFT ME SOME NASTY MESSAGES ON OTHER BOARDS.

(R) In the matter of your shutdown, can you explain what happened?

(ACS) FIRST OF ALL, IT HAPPENED LAST MONDAY AT ABOUT 5:00pm, EXACTLY AN HOUR BEFORE I WAS TO LEAVE FOR A CONCERT. I GOT A PHONE CALL SAYING THAT IN A LITTLE WHILE, A DETECTIVE WOULD BE AT MY HOUSE INVESTIGATING SOME COMPLAINTS ABOUT A BBS. I IMMEDIATELY RAN DOWN AND ERASED MY USERLOG ON MY MAIN DISK, BUT I HID THE BACKUP DISK IN MY CLOSET. WHEN THE DETECTIVE ARRIVED, HE HAD SOMEONE ELSE WITH HIM. THEY ASKED ME A FEW QUESTIONS AND THEN TOOK MY MAIN DISK AND A FEW OTHERS, I GUESS FOR EVIDENCE. AND THEY TOLD ME THAT IF THEY GET COMPLAINTS AGAIN, THEY WILL REMOVE ALL OF MY HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE AND FINE ME $1000.

(R) Did you get any specific details as to why they singled your BBS out?

(ACS) THEY SAID THEY GOT COMPLAINTS FROM A FEW PEOPLE. BUT IT COULD HAVE BEEN ONE. BUT I DOUBT IF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT IS REALLY INTERESTED IN SHUTTING DOWN A SMALL BBS.

(R) What is the current status of this matter?

(ACS) RIGHT NOW I AM WAITING TO GET MY DISKS BACK. BUT I DON'T THINK I WILL HAVE TO GO TO COURT ANYMORE.

(R) Did you get a court notice or any advice pertaining to a hearing before?

NO, I WAS QUESTIONED ONCE BEFORE, BUT IT WAS ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.

(R) Did the Police Department give you any other warnings?

(ACS) NO, I DON'T THINK THERE IS MUCH THEY CAN DO TO ME BESIDES FINE AND TAKING MY STUFF.

(R) Can you put up another BBS?? And if so, Would you?? and what would you do differently this time?

(ACS) I CAN PUT UP ANOTHER BOARD, BUT, THEY SAID I CAN'T PIRATE STUFF ON IT. I AM IN FACT, PUTTING ANOTHER BOARD UP IN EARLY NOVEMBER CALLED "THE CULT OF ATARI". IT WILL BE RUN ON BBS EXPRESS. THIS TIME I WILL BE MUCH MORE CAREFUL WITH WHO I LET ON. I WILL ASK MANY MORE QUESTIONS THEN JUST WHERE THEY LIVE.

(R) How old are you?

(ACS) 16, I TURN 17 IN OCTOBER.

(R) What has been your parents view of this matter?

(ACS) THEY DIDN'T CARE. THEY TOLD ME THAT IT IS MY PROBLEM AND I HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT MYSELF.

(R) Given the chance, and you found out who was the culprit, do you have any words you would like to pass to the party?

(ACS) WELL, FIRST I WOULD LIKE TO TELL HIM THAT I WOULD USE MY INFLUENCE TO GET HIM KICKED OFF EVERY LOCAL BBS. I WOULD ALSO SPREAD THE WORD WHO IT WAS, BECAUSE A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE BE DISRUPTED BY THIS ACT.

(R) Do you think BBS systems should allow use of pirated software on their systems?

(ACS) IT IS UP TO THE SYSOP. BUT SINCE A MAJORITY OF THE BOARDS ARE, I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT. THE GOOD THINK ABOUT IT IS THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY $30-$40 DOLLARS IN THE STORE.

(R) What about the guy writing the software, shouldn't he be compensated for his effort, What is your opinion to this?

(ACS) WELL, I THINK THAT THE AUTHOR OF THE SOFTWARE IS RIPPING OFF THE PEOPLE WHO DO BUY THE SOFTWARE. THE PRICES OF SOFTWARE ARE MUCH TOO HIGH. ONE EXCEPTION IS MASTERTRONIC. MASTERTRONIC KEEPS THEIR PRICES BELOW $10. AND BECAUSE OF THAT, I HAVE ALREADY BOUGHT A FEW OF THEIR THINGS RECENTLY.

(R) In closing, Do you have any comments for other sysops on how they should run their systems now?

(ACS) WELL, I THINK THAT IF THEY FEEL THEY ARE SAFE, THERE IS NOTHING WRONG. BUT THE PERSON THAT REPORTED ME MUST BE CAUGHT AND PUNISHED. HE IS A DEFINITE THREAT TO THE COMPUTING WORLD.

(R) Do you have anything else you would like to add?

(ACS) I WOULD LIKE TO THANK STEVE THE KID FOR HELPING ME OUT WITH THIS SITUATION.

Obviously, this pirate is not in the least "reformed" by his brush(es) with the law. But he will soon be of age and then will be much more legally responsible and punishable. It is sad but interesting that he actually sees the "informant" to be a bigger threat to the computing public than the pirate.

We can hope that the fact that piracy IS REALLY GETTING LEGAL ATTENTION at last will give would-be pirates pause to consider their futures.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH

"I WAS A TEENAGE PIRATE"
by Jeff McWilliams

The typical software pirate is likely to read this and say to himself, "Yeah, another GOODIE-GOODIE complaining about people who copy disks." If you're a typical software 'pirate', and you're reading this, you should think about the damage that's being caused, and rethink your position. In my opinion, you should even rethink your involvement in a user group.

The purpose of a user group is to provide interactive support between its members and the Computer Company it supports. Anyone who illegally copies software is causing the computer and software industries to lose money. Losing money will force them to quit wasting their time developing software for the Atari. If Atari has no software supporting their computers, then there will be no more Atari (and little use for user groups).

How long will it take before typical software pirates realize the damage they're doing by copying software? Thankfully, it didn't take me that long.

Ashamed as I am to admit it, I too have contributed to making Atari users the worst of any brand when it comes to illegally copying software. But now at least, I've stopped, and I'm writing this article to try to convince at least some of you to stop too. Maybe we could start a chain-reaction. It would be nice, but I don't have my hopes up about it.

The problem is that a lot of people are too stubborn to quit doing it. Or they're selfish about hoarding all the programs they can get their greedy hands on. Maybe they just don't grasp the amount of damage copying software does to the computer community. Typically, a software pirate may have a number of these attitudes. Sure, the good ole hacker ethic says that programs should be for public distribution, but it also says "keep computing alive at any cost." So much for the hacker ethic.

This is not only my opinion. Everywhere you look, you'll read the same thing, whether it be another person writing for another newsletter or for a computer magazine. Or you see it being written by someone like Matthew Ratcliff (a top public domain programmer for the Atari), a person whom I admire for his programming ability. The story's the same everywhere. I didn't just pull this out of a hat.

I plan on buying software for the rest of my days. Hopefully, you'll do the same. And if you can't afford it, then try looking to the wealth of public domain software. I just downloaded a program called GOSDUP. It's a DUP.SYS file that gives you a Graphics Operating System, sort of like GEM. It's simply great! Sometimes the public domain can be your BEST source of software. Currently the best terminal program available for the Atari is Express!, a public domain program. So are some excellent word processing, spreadsheet and game programs.

We are beginning to hear of programs that aren't being ported to the Atari because of piracy. If piracy doesn't stop soon there won't be any more new programs to copy. Then what will you do, buy another computer?

Let's stop piracy now, while we've got a chance.

Review

"OPERATION MARKET GARDEN"
by Strategic Simulations Inc.
$59.95 - 1 or 2 players
Reviewed by Jeff Bone

This game is based on the World War II campaign of the same name. The book and movie "A Bridge Too Far" was based on the infamous battle. It was supposed to ba an easy campaign. The plan was simple. In September 1944 there were three bridges between the Allied forces and German soil. But, to for each of the bridges individually would be time consuming and costly. And the Germans would surely blow-up any bridge which became jeopardized. Therefore General Montgomery devised a plan which capture all three bridges intact in one fatal swoop. An entire airborne division would be dropped at each of the bridges deep in enemy territory. Meanwhile, an armor spearhead would punch through the line and rush forward to relieve each of the airborne divisions and secure the bridges. The time-table was critical. Unfortunately, the plan was ill-fated. For outside the city of Arnhem, where the most important bridge was, lay almost two German tank divisions which were either ignored or undetected by intelligence sources. The rest is history...

First, I feel I must discuss the game packaging. This is one of the most attractive and professional games I have seen. The rule book is 8" by 11" printed on glossy stock in multi-colors. Several original historical drawings adorn the interior. The rules are concise and clear. A historical commentary is also provided. Designer notes and game play hints wrap-up the book. Also, there are two multi-colored laminatd maps which show the entire play area. On the reverse side are all the terrain, movement and combat tables which are the heart of the game. The front of the game box is attractive and the back-side contains ample text and graphics to let the buyer know what the game is about.

Upon booting the diskette, a game menu appears. Your first option is to play a new or saved game. Next, a level of diffuculty is chosen. Other choices are: historical or free set-up, advanced or intermediate rules, hidden or non-hidden enemy units, random or historical weather and number of players. That's just to get you started! A nice feature about this menu is that if you are loading a saved game the rest of the menu allows you to change the complexity of the game. This is an excellent play balance feature.

If you choose to play the computer you must be the Allies. But, this is O.K. since I feel the challenge lies with the Allies.

Next follows a series of phases too numerous and complex to cover in detail which complete one game turn. There are ten turns to the game. Some of the phases and rules cover a variety of events and options like the following: communications, supplies, units in travel or normal mode, offensive and defensive artillery, engineers, bridge demolition and building, unit efficiency and morale, unit build-up and break-down, unit disbanding and fortification and much more.

The text and graphics are also par excellence. The terrain is colorful and pleasant. Unit nationality and type are easily identifiable. And the balance between graphics and text is perfect. Some people don't enjoy text games, they want graphics. But, some of my favorite games are text. Regardless, this game will satisfy both groups.

This game is a real nail-biter from start to finish since the game's time-table is as critacal as the real battle. It's possible to take the majority of the contested area and still lose. Because, the emphasis is placed on the three bridges (i.e. victory points). I would not recommend this game to a military simulation beginner. I've played the game several times using the same conditions and none of the games were anything alike. Each time I was forced to deal with new and challenging situations. For the hard-core military simulation gamer this game is a must. In fact, this games only downfall is that will appeal to only avid war-gamers.

This game was designed in 1985. But, because it was ahead of it's time, it's still state of the art. It was designed by Dave Landrey and Chuck Kroegel. For my money, two of the best designers in the business.

On the software report card, I give this game an A.

So check your reserve chute and weapon. Make sure your static line is attached securely. Then, wait for the green jump light...

Geronimo!

Computer Consignments

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ST Tech

ST Random Disk Access in ST BASIC
by Brian Goluska

The program listed below (RAND_EX.BAS) shows a way to read a sequential disk file into a random disk file, and then access it from BASIC. For convenience, it assumes that a ramdisk named D: exists on the system.

Usage: Many BASIC programs have tables (arrays) of messages. If you code these into BASIC, you have to change the program whenever the messages change. If these message files exist outside the program, then they can be changed more easily than the code can be changed.

Two example files are also listed: WEAP.DAT and EVENT.DAT. Both are First Word files produced with WP Mode off. Or you can make your own using First Word. Keying records in using First Word is much, much easier than coding lines into BASIC. Be careful, however, with punctuation. You can't use commas, for instance, because BASIC will see a comma as a delimiter and break the record into 2 records unexpectedly. The record:

Space Gypsy Friends Wreck the Town, Your Share is $400

will be read by BASIC as:

Space Gypsy Friends Wreck the Town (Record 1)
Your Share is $400 (Record 2)

Other punctuation besides comma and carriage return can act as a delimiter. See the BASIC manual.

About the program:

Subroutine WTITLE simply makes a full screen blank window and does a lot of code to change the window's title.

Subroutine INFILES does the reading from drive A: into the ramdisk, and also maintains the record count for each file. Then a simple syntax checking picks either WEAP or EVENT to get the random result.

Comments: Each time a record is read from the ramdisk, it opens and closes the file. This would be very wasteful if the ramdisk wasn't so quick. If the program were to be changed to read from a physical disk, this would have to be changed. Special care with the file numbers in the OPEN, FIELD, GET, INPUT, and CLOSE should also be used.

The sample file WEAP.DAT is a small version of a real application I use, making random weapons choices for adventure/arena gaming. The sample file EVENT.DAT is just for fun.

Program listing:

```
10 REM Demonstration Program for Random Disk
Access
12 gosub WTITLE:REM set up window
18 gosub INFILES:REM read the files to RAMDISK
20 ?"Enter W for weapon, E for events ala
M.U.L.E."
30 input in$
40 if in$="W" or in$ ="w" then gosub WEAP
42 if in$="E" or in$ ="e" then gosub EVENT
50 goto 20
100 end
200 WEAP: REM chooses random weapon
205 open "R",#3,"D:RWEAP.DAT",128
206 field #3, 128 as IN$
210 PICK% = int(WEAPINX*rnd(1))+1
220 get #3, PICK%
230 ?"PICK% IS ";PICK%;" GOT ";IN$
235 close #3
240 return
300 EVENT: REM chooses a random event
305 open "R",#3,"D:REVENT.DAT",128
306 field #3, 128 as IN$
310 PICK% = int(EVENTINX*rnd(1))+1
320 get #3, PICK%
330 ?"PICK% IS ";PICK%;" GOT ";IN$
335 close #3
340 return
900 INFILES:
910 open "R",#3,"D:RWEAP.DAT",128
920 field #3, 128 as OUT$
930 open "I",#2,"A:WEAP.DAT",128
940 on error goto 10000
950 LOOP: input #2, IN$
960 WEAPINX = WEAPINX + 1
970 IN$=IN$+SPACE$(128-LEN(IN$))
980 lset OUT$ = IN$
990 put #3,WEAPINX
1000 goto LOOP
1010 close #2:close #3
1220 open "R",#3,"D:REVENT.DAT",128
1230 field #3, 128 as OUT$
1240 open "I",#2,"A:EVENT.DAT",128
1250 on error goto 10210
1260 LOOP2: input #2, IN$
1270 EVENTINX = EVENTINX + 1
1280 IN$=IN$+SPACE$(128-LEN(IN$))
1290 lset OUT$ = IN$
1300 put #3,EVENTINX
1310 goto LOOP2
1320 close #2:close #3
1340 return:' end of INIT files
```

```
10000 ENDIN:
10005 'end of weap.dat
10010 if err = 62 then resume 1010
10205 'end of event.dat
10210 if err = 62 then resume 1320
20000 WTITLE:
20005 poke systab+24,1: ' turn window off
20007 randomize(0):fullw 2:clearw 2:gotoxy 0,0
20010 a#=gb: ' Fetch globals address
20020 gintin = peek(a#+8): ' AES int_in array
20030 poke gintin+0,peek(systab+8): ' OUTPUT
window handle
20040 poke gintin+2,2: ' we're changing its
name
20050 s# = gintin+4: ' DBL address for long
poke
20060 title$="Random Disk Access
Example"+chr$(0)
20065 poke s#,varptr(title$)
20070 gemsys(105)
20075 poke systab+24,0:' turn window on
20080 return
```

File WEAP.DAT:

```
Nothing
Knife
Club
Sword
Spear
```

File EVENT.DAT:

```
Acid Rain - Food Production up but Energy
Collectors Melt
Meteor Shower - Forty Meteors
Radiation - MULES Go Crazy - All MULES Stay and
Work
The Council for Agriculture Awards You 55 Cents
for Each Plot Not Farmed
Sunspots - Energy Production Up but Oil Prices
Fall
Fire in the Store! All Insurance Premiums Up
1000%
You caught a MOUNTAIN Wumpus!
A MOUNTAIN Wumpus is easy.  Try Catching a
SWAMP Wumpus.
Do-Gooders Return All Chrystite
Do-Gooders Return All Chrystite (they can show
up twice)
Earthquake North and South
Earthquake East and West Moves Mountains
MULE Runs Away Because Serial Number was not
Recorded
Bad News - You Get Sued by a Distant Relative
for a Vast Fortune
Your Gypsy Friends Wreck the Town - You Get
$400 as Your Cut
```

VIEWPOINT

A FEW WORDS...
By Leo Sell

Recently, while reviewing the local Commodore club Newsletter, I became aware of a very disturbing problem that their club was dealing with. It seems that Commodore, in order to recognize the group as an "official" user group, REQUIRES the names and addresses of the active members to be sent to the corporate offices. The penalty for failure to comply is termination as a "authorized/recognized" user group. I find this to be highly offensive and am writing this to fight the precedent, and to make people aware of the problem so that it will not spread to other brand computer user groups.

The idea of invading our privacy in such a way is unfathomable. The only reason a company could have for doing such a thing is to easily build a mailing list for use or sale.

Now, I don't mind staying informed through junk mail as well as other sources. But if you want to use or sell my name and address, please be gracious enough to ASK. Don't intimidate, strong-arm, or force it out of me. Then you are violating my dignity, if not my rights.

It seems to me that this sort of action is a very real invasion of privacy. Furthermore, to me it is highly unethical. A REQUEST for such information is one thing, but making the information a requirement of being listed as an "official" user group is out and out blackmail. Computer companies and their corresponding user groups need one another. They can support and build each other up in mutually beneficial ways. But, there must be a lot of trust in the relationship. A demand like this violates the that trust.

Atari Corporation, please be on notice. DO NOT ever put Atari user groups in this kind of position. Commodore may have set a precedent with this action, but please don't follow it. It is a very disquieting development, potentially extremely damaging to user group relations. We do not ever want to make this kind of decision, so please do not require it of us. Instead, let's continue to do all we can TOGETHER to promote Atari computing.

COMPUTER MUSIC

MIDITALK
By Mitchell Wells

The most common question I'm asked about in relation to MIDI (Musical Instrument Ditital Interface) is what specifically it does. The most common MISCONCEPTION about MIDI in this respect is that MIDI somehow digitizes sound. This brief article will explain simply what MIDI really does and also how I use MIDI to make music with my ATARI computer.

Probably everyone is fimilar with a player piano. A player piano has a roll of paper that, through the punching of holes in this roll, records the notes played by a pianist so this sequence of notes can be played back by the piano without the pianist. At least, the first player pianos did this. Later, the Duo Art piano was introduced which would not only record the notes played, but also the velocity and exact duration of the notes, capturing the exact performance of the pianist. This was all but forgotten with the advent of record and tape. But tape has many problems, one of which is once you record it, it's done. There is no good (read: easy) way to edit a live performance on tape. MIDI to some extent solves these problems. It works in much the way the Duo Art player piano does, recording the notes played (not digitizing sound), their duration and velocity, and the use of various controlers (pitch bend, modulation wheel, program change) found on synthesizers. But instead of punching holes in a roll of paper to record this information, MIDI allows for a computer to store this information, which enables editing of the recorded information in much the way a letter is edited using a word processor. MIDI on most computer systems also allows the layering of this recorded information, enabling the computer to play many synthesizers at once and synchronize them. Other items, like drum machines and echo machines, can also be synchronized with this recorded information. Two things make MIDI useful to any musician (or non-musician): the opportunity to easily edit the information recorded, and the recording of many tracks (layers) of information without the loss in sound that occurs when tape is used. Every time the computer plays out the song recorded, it plays the original instruments the song was recorded on, just like the player piano. MIDI also allows for the transfer of other data to synthesizers, like sound settings, volume settings, tempo, etc..

My system consists of an ATARI 800XL that has been upgraded to 256K, an 810 disk drive, a MIDI interface (like the one offered by HYBRID ARTS in California) and software (HYBRID ARTS' MIDITRACK III) on the computer side. With this computer system I run 4 synthesizers (Yamaha TX7, Yamaha CX5M w/SFG-05, Casio CZ101, Korg Poly 800), 3 drum machines (Casio RZ1, Korg DDM 110 and 220), and an echo (Korg SDD2000). I record a song by first playing the synthesizers and drum machines, and recording them in tracks using the ATARI computer via MIDI. The computer then plays back all these keyboards and drums, and I mix this onto one track of a 4 track tape recorder, which leaves me 3 tracks to put on live guitar, bass and vocals. Then finally, I mix these four tracks onto a regular stereo cassette and the creative process is finished. Although most larger studios have much more equipment and many more tracks on tape available to them, the recording process using MIDI and tape is essentially the same.

Next month I'll tell you what you need to start your own MIDI studio on an ATARI and how much it costs (it's so cheap to get started, you just won't believe it). I'll also tell you some specifics on the software available.

Call the C.H.A.O.S. BBS
517-371-1106 24 Hours
HOW-300/1200 BAUD

"Think back... which keys did you press?"
(reprinted from LAACE, July 1986)

Last Hacks

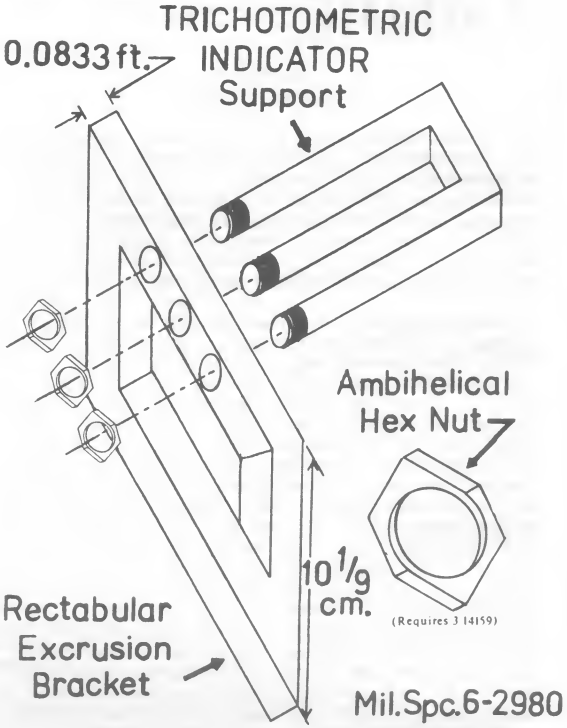
PROGRAM ERRORS DUE TO PARASTATIC CONDUCTANCE
Contributed By Buzz Kelley
REPRINTED FROM M.A.C.C.

Extensive research underway at the AMES research facility home office has determined that a large percentage of microcomputer systems programming errors are being caused by parastatic conductance which results from differential spurving of the hydroscopic marselvanes located in the prefabulated amilite base of the unilateral detractor mechanisms of many microcomputer models now in production.

AMES researchers have been unable to offer any remedy for this troublesome situation other than to recommend manestically spacing the grouting brushes on the periphery of the nubbing purwell. Although on the surface this would appear to alleviate the problems currently being experienced by many owners and operators of the microcomputer systems, we have found that this treatment actually leads to further complications in causing the regurgitive wennel sprocket to transmit microgriffage to the anhydrous dangling pin, from whence it is modulated, amplified and splitnagled, and thus causing transcendental hopper dadoscope failure. This in turn causes quasipiestic depleneration of the bitumogenous sprandels, leading to an excessively high level RMP (0.0876 PPQ/M) peak nivel-sheave voltage (per our observations under laboratory conditions using promulgenisis varianatistical method) which further magnifies the amnesial slump found in the rear of most units.

It is apparent that any successful solution absolutely be based on the regenerative low-ohmic nofers combined with a high degree of medial interation of magno-reluctance and resistance to atmospherical rillarah within non-conductive capacitative impedances. Our senior technicians have discovered a conclusive, yet simple and effective remedy which involves a mere modification of the spiral decommutator by the installation of a rectabular bracket and the adjoining bioptumalmaltrichotometric indicator support (see attachment for precise location on most mod V}s). These items should be purchased (from petty cash) from a local electronic supply house and installed immediately.

It is the opinion of our technicians that these remedial installations should be within the scope of the average users realm, and that bringing your computer to a service facility for adjustment may not be necessary. Upon installation, the above cited malfunctions should be reduced significantly and you should experience greatly increased non-reversible tremic amifacience.



Note: The special ambihelical hexnut is unique in that attempts to remove it in a conventional manner only succeeds in tightening it. Because of this design feature, the nut must be fully screwed on before it can be screwed off.

"Wait a minute... Did you hear something?"

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october 1986

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Atari News

The big news this month is ATARI GOES PUBLIC (ownership, that is):

ATARI CORP. PRESS RELEASE, Sept. 18, 1986
(Excerpted)

(Sunnyvale, CA) Atari Corporation announced today that it has filed a Registration Statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission for an initial public offering by the Company of 4,500,000 shares of Common Stock (and up to an additional 675,000 shares that may be purchased by the Underwriters from the Company to cover over-allotments) through an Underwriting group to be managed by PaineWebber, Incorporated. The price range is anticipated to be between $11.50 and $13.50 per share, and the offering is scheduled for mid- to late October. A written prospectus with respect to the offering will be available from PaineWebber, Incorporated.

A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission but has not yet become effective. These securities may not be sold, nor may offers to buy be accepted prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective.

For more information, please contact Greg Pratt, Chief Financial Officer of Atari Corp. at (408) 745-2349.

In a generally positive artical the day following the press release, the WALL STREET JOURNAL reported that the offering would be a 16% share of the company, showing ATARI is valuing itself at around $350 million dollars. Jac Tramiel and family bought ATARI from WARNER COMMUNICATIONS for $240 million and will use much of the funds generated in the sale to pay the reamianing debt owed WARNER. The Tramiels will retain a 53% interest in ATARI.

The stock is expected to be good investment. Jack Tramiel has taken a company known to have a significant past profit record (before several years of large losses) and built it back to over 12 million dollars of profit during the first half of 1986.

Conjecture at user-groups across the country centers on "what if" all the clubs and users snatched whatever stock they could... and made Jack pay more attention to his customers, the users!

APPLE finally got in the 16-bit home market this month with the announcement of the APPLE IIGS. Billed as a "high end product for families with kids and for the home office", it offers some of the color graphics and sound (that's the G and S) of the ATARI ST and COMMODORE AMIGA.

Despite the fact that the MACINTOSH shares the same 68000 cpu with the ST and AMIGA, the new GS will act more like those competitors than the MAC does. Offering the same 4,000+ colors as the AMIGA, it goes further and ads 32 voices plus a speech sythesizer.

The biggest asset of the new processor is that it retains the ability to run about 90% of the existing APPLE II software base as well as new programs designed to use its extra power. In fact, an upgrade kit will be available for the IIe to the new GS system.

Although the AMIGA may have to share a price bracket with the new APPLE, the ST market should be unscathed. Prices will be around $1,900 for a color setup with 256k and drive, and $1,500 for monochrome. The upgrade for the IIe will be about $500.

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

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We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

Rich Barnes - Managing Editor
MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
(517) 349-0513

Another month has passed and once again it's time to publish the newsletter. This month we have received articles and reviews, not only from our own readers but also through the courtesy of Compuserve's DL7 Section as well as Z-Magazine. The exchange of this information is vital to all. The more that we know about our systems, the more valuable they become.

We would also like to welcome the GENESEE ATARI GROUP from Flint, MI. and the CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS from Jackson, MI. both newly introduced to our newsletter. These groups produced excellent newsletters of their own in the past. We hope that the editorial staff of these groups will continue to process information from their clubs and continue to support our efforts to provide a quality newsletter.

Deadlines are a bit of a pain, but unfortunately are a necessary evil. We would appreciate every effort being made to meet them as it allows us to publish and get the newsletter to you on time, which was the main objective at the start.

If you wish to submit an article, opinion, comment, tip, program, etc. please do so. We don't always have the room to publish everything we receive, but if it isn't in this issue, it will most probably appear in the next. To those of you that have submitted articles, thank you. We appreciate the support and hope that you will continue. To those of you that haven't got around to it yet, please don't hesitate to get involved. This is your newsletter and it will only grow and prosper if you want it to. Other groups in the Mid-Michigan Area are also considering joining our efforts. We sincerely hope that they do, for this not only increases the reader base, but also allows for the submission of more articles and information. Atari users have always been noted for sharing information in the support of each other. What the company has failed to do, they have provided for themselves.

To those groups that have joined us and to our new readers, We say welcome. This is your publication as well as ours. Together we can make it a success and watch it grow. Thank You!

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C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER
By Leo Sell

If everything is going right, you should be reading this before the October meeting. Timing is critical for us this time since there are two important events taking place on that weekend. As in years past, the annual CHAOS auction will take place at the October meeting. You are welcome to bring things to sell 10 percent consignment, and of course to bid and attempt to get a bargain or two. There is always a great assortment of hardware and software and miscellany. It is a great chance to sell some seldom used software (original only please) and hardware (we'll take anything) and to get a few great deals too! Please come a little early to register both the itmes you are selling, and to register as a buyer. Going once!

The October meeting is the day before the Fall Computer Show at the Clarion. As we were last spring, CHAOS will be there. It is my hope that you will participate in 2 ways. One is by buying your ticket(s) from the Club and attending. The other is by helping out - through the donation of time and use of equipment for the day. It takes many people, out front, and behind the scenes, to make a good presentation. Call John Baker (CHAOS Head Librarian) and volunteer. It's a lot of work and a lot of fun. The opportunities to pick up software and hardware at low prices are excellent. I hope you'll be a part of it!!

Speaking of being a part of things. We have been promoting the idea that people need to get involved. Well, I'd like to thank those that are involved for all their help. Without John Nagy, there would be no Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. As Sysop, he also kills himself trying to keep the CHAOS BBS one of the best in the country.

Our present crew of Librarians, John Baker, Sally Nagy and Malcolm Cleveland, are doing an outstanding job providing high quality Public-Domain programs for the Club. Brian Goluska is doing a great job with the ST group. Richard and Judy Barnes, Jeff Bone and Marv Goldstein are all pitching in with the newsletter. Gary Ferris is faithful with the membership records and we can always count on

Richard Evans to bring the Publications Library. Guy Hurt has been bringing us fine programs at the meetings. The list goes on. But, that doesn't excuse you if you are not involved. Many more jobs need done, such as Publicist for the Club, and many of the jobs being done need to be spread out a little more. Jump in today...see YOUR name in lights!!

I would like to congratulate Central Park Computers (formerly Pro Video) in Okemos. As far as I know, they are now the only 1040ST dealer in town. They also merit congratulations for their fine new store. It is very elegant. I wish them the best.

I have just moved from one house to another as I write this. Things are still in a terrible uproar. Because of that, and because I haven't had a chance to research the question, the article on DOS functions from BASIC will be delayed....Indefinitely fromthe looks of this house.

So long...see you at the meetings and the Show.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	393-7792
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	Barry Schroeder	627-6708
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

C.H.A.O.S. SEPTEMBER 8-BIT MINUTES
By: Gary Ferris, Secretary/Treasurer

With summer coming to a close, it seems people are starting to get back into the computer habit. There was an excellent turnout of over 60 people.

Volunteers to work the CHAOS tables at the October 19 show were requested. If you can help, please contact John Baker or leave a message on the CHAOS BBS. This includes your time, equipment or both.

Frank Nagy Gave a presentation about a special insurance rider which would cover your computer for somethings which your regular homeowners policy will not cover. Contact Frank for more info.

Xtal by Antic Software was demoed. It's a Star Raiders type game which looked very good at less than $20.

John Nagy showed us (what else?) another excellent Disk of the Month, which featured an excellent music program by CHAOS's own Ryan Bennick (excellent job Ryan!).

Guy Hurt demoed a Party Quiz question generator program written by Richard Evans. The program allows you to make your own data disks for PQ. A short game was played using Guy's questions which was won by Brian Goluska. (What do you expect? The ST's supposed to be smarter.) (he he)

The balance in the treasury is $954.77

Don't forget October 18 is the annual CHAOS auction. Bring your equipment and original software which you wish to sell, and bring your checkbook to buy some bargains.

ST-UMBLINGS
By Brian Goluska

This month ST-UMBLINGS replaces ST-UTTERINGS, because the ST part of CHAOS has had some misfortunes lately. Mike Clewley, our librarian for the ST disk library, has resigned, although he is still interested in helping with some CHAOS activities. Our September meeting had a room mix-up, and therefore we couldn't set up a demo machine. (We did have a very good discussion, however). And our attendance is down! On the plus side, the September meeting had 2 new ST owners, and 2 people with ST's on order. One of the new owners is Mitch Wells, who gave the MIDI demos at last May's show, and at a CHAOS meeting this summer.

(If you missed Mitch's demo at CHAOS, you missed a lot. Here is a guy who says "we'll just have some fun". Then he goes "plinkity-plinkity-plink" on his keyboard, and the Atari 800 picks up the rhythm. You think, what's this "plinkity-plink" stuff?

Then Mitch begins adding instruments one at a time. In a short time he's playing music that sounds like the sound track of a movie, being played by 50 people. He had, of course, various extra hardware like "drum machines" being controlled from the computer.)

But as much as I welcome Mitch to the ST, I need to get serious. I'm going to put on my Leo Sell hat, and plead for ST members to contribute more time and effort to CHAOS. I'll plead, cajoule, and beg:

"OK you goof-offs, get your _____ to the meetings, and bring in the new software and

hardware you've been buying. We also need a new librarian, and someone with 'Deep Pockets' to buy one of every hardware and software product that comes on the market."

Done with sermon.

At the September meeting we discussed ANTIC'S START and COMPUTE'S ST issue, and the merits of each. It seems that both magazines are experimenting with ST issues with disks, where program listings and such are not printed, but only on the disk. ANTIC also sells START without the disk, for 1/3 the cost. Reaction is mixed. It seems that we as users will have to experiment also. It seems to me that both magazines will have to insure top quality with every issue to make the idea succeed. At $5, I can buy a crummy issue, and maybe try it again later. At $15, I'll feel burned if I get a single crummy issue. So both the magazines and the users will be feeling the situation out. ("Hey, Deep Pockets, how about you buy some subscriptions, and let us know if they're worthwhile?")

Many other topics were touched on. Mitch said that European MIDI software was beginning to show up in the US, albeit still very expensive. Problems with mail order companies, and how to avoid them, took up a lot of time. Some mail order companies are very good, and apparently cause few problems (come to a meeting and I might name names). Which hard disks and which inexpensive modems might be reliable was a topic, which seemed to be answered "wait a month".

I'll wrap up with another simple tip that I learned this month. I have complained earlier that TOS options sometimes allow the carriage return to execute an option, while a similar display will make the carriage return cancel or abort. The correct convention is that the option with a bolder outline will be the one chosen with a carriage return. Those of you with color monitors might wonder why it took me so long to figure this out.

Next month: Re-STrengthening?

Disk Library

The Library Table
By: John Baker

Deadlines!!!!! Can't seem to get with the program when it comes to meeting deadlines. The newsletter editor was nice enough to call me after I had missed the deadline for submitting my article. Heck, I was only 2 days late. I mean shheeeesshhhh!!!! what do people want??? perfection?!!

Procrastination is part of our American rights. If that's denied, what's next?, mom's apple pie! C'mon now! We don't want to set a precedent here. Whew, I feel better after getting the air cleared on the inalienable rights that are supposed to be afforded newsletter article writers.

Things are picking up and looking up as far as 8-bit software is concerned. Public domain programs, for the most part, are more impressive than ever. The renewed interest in 8-bit machines spurred on by the upgrade mania is a welcome sight.

Speaking of upgrades, we have in the library, a complete disk of all needed files for upgrading and utilizing the 800, 800XL, and 130XE. Ramdisk drivers, DOCS, and information files are included.

Use your upgrade with one of the top notch terminal programs we have, and the amount of new software within your reach by phone jumps astronomically. Your phone bill also takes a substantial jump, but that's another story.

The bottom line is that all this "free" software can be very expensive. That is where your library takes some of the bite out of obtaining decent new stuff.

Need word processing software? Speedscript is very good. The fact that Speedcalc, a good spreadsheet program, comes on the same disk, with complete DOCS for both files makes things sweeter. The new Textpro is in a class by itself. Very extensive and complete DOCS with this one.

If you are missing programs from ANALOG or ANTIC, check with your club librarian or with us here at the meeting. Our Disk of The Month offers an assortment of programs and is a real value, a combination that is hard to beat.

All library disks are only $5.00 each or 5 for $20.00. We were having Leo, our distinguished president, personally autograph each library disk sold, but found disk sales to take a dramatic increase when that practice was discontinued. Talk about gratitude!
By the way, if you are looking over the library listing and see an item that you need before the next meeting, give me a call, and I can arrange to have it winging to you through the good old U.S. mail.

Don't forget the big C.H.A.O.S. auction and free-for-all in October. Bring your goodies (hardware,software--ORIGINAL) to sell, and your checkbook, or good old cash for buying. See you there.

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THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

Fall means more people at meetings and more people on the BBS. We have been adding over 100 new users each month... and dropping nearly that many too. It's a fact of space that we have to drop users who don't use. Our user base is now hovering around 400... and it can't really go higher. Fortunately, many "new users" are calling long distance and never return, so they can be dropped without problems.

But if you are a local user who finds out your password at CHAOS is no longer recognized, don't take offense... you just were gone too long! Just sign up again, you will get your old access level right back!

I am making program changes to make the sign-on faster. Right now, if you are at the end of the user list, it takes over a minute to find your password file. By moving the operation to RAM, that can be cut to under 10 seconds... but the change is proving to be trickier than it seems. I also want to add CITY and STATE for each caller, as we get so many national calls. It is fun to see where all these people you converse with daily are REALLY calling from!

New at the BBS is ZMAGAZINE, put together by a very busy RON KOVACS of CHICAGO. He assembles over 200 sectors (over 10 pages) of articles focusing primarily on the ATARI COMPUTER each WEEK! Contributions come from all over (he includes articles from OUR magazine too!). Another feature is a look into some of the biggest and best BBS's around the country- title screens, menus, some messages, and a look at their download contents. All very entertaining.

Look for a new ZMAGAZINE each week in our new files section... we will keep the current issue plus the previous one online for you. Either download with the DISPLAY option to read it all on-line, or take it and the two utilities, ZREAD and ZPRINT, to enjoy as you like off line. ZREAD will allow you to choose an article from anywhere in the issue to read out-of-sequence, plus do individual screen dumps (watch for a smoother operating version available soon).

The best way to describe ZMAGAZINE is to say, "LOOK AROUND". A number of articles from ZMAGAZINE are in this and will be in future issues of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE.

If there is interest by members without modems to see ZMAGAZINE, we can put all the issues on a disk with the ZREADer and offer it in the disk library each month... it will take up BOTH SIDES!

Speaking of those "disenfranchised" members with no modem to call their own, how about this: A used 1030 should be available cheaply enough that CHAOS could buy one to sign out at the meetings. Members could use it for, say, two weeks, then hand it over to another waiting member. This way, those who are unsure of their "need" or "desire" for a modem would have a real chance to find out without wasting the money if they aren't really into it. I am sure that this would result in a nearly 100% conversion rate... who would have believed that it would be so much fun until they tried it? Let's talk about this possibility at the next meeting!

Til next time, see ya in CHAT - CHAOS BBS (517) 371-1106

Call the C.H.A.O.S. BBS
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VIEWPOINT

JUST MY OPINION
by Leo Sell

I am growing more and more concerned about the lack of retail outlets for Atari products, both 8-bit and 16-bit. There are a number of purported reasons for this: smaller user base, piracy and etc. But I think the fault lies deeper - with Atari Corporation itself. When the Tramiels took over, we all expected the "New Atari" to display some of the marketing genius that made Commodore number one in HOME comuputing. Instead, what we see is a shoestring marketing effort, based on the use of User Groups to "spread the word". I am not so certain that we in the user groups are not being unfairly taken advantage of.

The total lack of marketing of the 8-bit line, and the near lack of marketing for the 16-bit computers, is something I find truly objectionable. No one outside of user groups and a limited part of the computer industry, knows anything about Atari computers. It galls me to see the high-tech, high-value Atari, relegated to an afterthought. Those in the know realize the high VALUE factor that Atari computers have. They have always been more computer for the money. But Joe Average,

watching Monday night football and thinking about a computer for his kids, has only the information from Television commercials. Yes Jack, Joe Average is more likely to believe those Apple and Commodore commercials than to ever research his choice of computers. We users know, that on a head to head comparison, Atari Computers will outperform everything in their class, especially taking into account the Price/Performance ratio. But, since Jack and Company are not getting Atari Computers into REAL Computer stores, or advertising or marketing in any noticable fashion, Joe Average will not have a chance to see and compare. He will walk right past the Atari section at Toys R Us and buy a Commodore, or he'll go to a Computer Store and buy and Apple, and think he has a great Home Computer.

The same is true in the Business market. Since the Atari computers are not seen in ComputerLand, or Entree or Businessland, etc, the average businessman and the average MIS manager have no inkling of their power and value. Try suggesting an Atari computer to the manager of a major DP installation. The peals of laughter will follow you right out the door.

Jack, you have continued the Atari tradition of high value, and we appreciate that. But you have also continued to make the same mistakes in marketing that the Old Atari did, plus you have repeated some you made while at Commodore.

You have to get the word out, Jack. The people who would buy, don't know about Atari. As far as the 16 and 32 bits, you had best get some kind of niche going there. Challenge the Mac in the Desktop Laser Publishing field. Market the computers as low cost mainframe terminals. Get the CDRom out. Stop resting on your previous reputation. Stop making it so difficult for small (but legitimate) computer stores to sell the ST. You must start marketing in a National, visible manner, and you must make the products more easily available. Otherwise, there is little hope left for Atari's future.

Atari News

TAG (Tri-City Atari User's Group) will be coming aboard the MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE in the November issue! Two new columns will be added to the general interest area - another ST column, and "Piece's Of Eight" (Bits, that is). TAG serves the SAGINAW, BAY CITY, and MIDLAND area and has a very strong ST following.

MICHTRON, one of the leading producers of ST software, will be the feature of the November TAG meeting. Michtron will be on hand to demo their products on both monochrome and color ST systems. There will be a question and answer period. EVERYBODY IS WELCOME!! Directions on how to get to the meeting will be in the TAG area of the November MID MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. (Or call LeRoy Valley at (517) 686-6796.

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C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Wolfgang Mueller	789-8917
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Secretary	Rick Sullivan	783-6652
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the first sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER
by Wolfgang Mueller

Well, I would like to welcome our membership to the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. I hope that you will appreciate this newsletter as much as I do.

Please remember that nominations will be taken for officers at the October meeting, and elections at the November meeting. Lets see a good turn out at these meetings in order to ensure a well rounded vote in the up coming elections.

I would also like to see if anyone is interested in programming classes, both basic and assembly. With the approach of winter, I would like to get something started.

TREASURER'S REPORT
by Scott Boland

As of September 26, 1986 the C.A.C.E. treasury contained $50.00 in petty cash and $259.06 in the bank account. I would like to remind all the members that club dues start to expire this November. Please try to pay your dues on the month prior to the expiration date. We will send out one newsletter after your dues expire, so don't miss out on this fantastic newsletter by letting your dues expire. Thank you, Scott Boland.

On the subject of the newsletter, we have decided to join the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. The cost to the club will be $0.50 per member per month. I hope everybody likes this change as we not only get our own club news, but we also receive news and articles from other Atari clubs around Michigan. The clubs that are currently participating are C.H.A.O.S., C.A.C.E., and Genesse Atari Computer Enthusiasts. I understand that the clubs in Saginaw, Grand Rapids, and Battle Creek are thinking of joining. This is the best Atari newsletter I have ever seen.

As of this writing I still don't have confirmation on the location of the computer fair we planned on holding in November. I hope to have all the information for the October meeting, so everybody try to be there so we can make this a huge success.

Disk Library

C.A.C.E. Software Library

Just a note to the membership that we are in the process of exchanging library disks with C.H.A.O.S. . This should generate more activity for our library. In the future, look for some great new programs in the library. By the way, the position of club librarian has been turned over to Bob Kingsbury. We thank Joe Garner for the time and effort that he put into the library.

Telecom

CACE BBS

The CACE BBS, which is not affiliated in any way with the C.A.C.E. club, is off-line because of software problems. Tim Porter, the sysop, said he hoped the board will be back up in about a month.

Review

TOUCHDOWN FOOTBALL By:Electronic Arts
Reviewed By:Steve Godun
(excerpted from ZMAGAZINE 9/86)

Touchdown Football (TF) is a very well programmed game of football. Many hours must have gone into this program, and its graphics and detail in the game are excellent. However, there are two reasons why I feel that this game is destined for failure: (A) Computer football was never very popular to begin with, and (B) Some vengeful Atari owners might not buy this program to "get back" at EA. for abandoning ATARI for so long.

In this version of football, you can play head-to-head with another human, play solo against the computer, or just relax and watch two computer-controlled teams battle it out on the monitor. It looks just as if you were watching a real game on TV. Where's the beer and pretzels?

This game looks like a total rewrite of Gamestar's Starbowl Football. In fact, if Gamestar had programmed it, my bet is it would be called "Super Starbowl Football" instead! But instead of a flat, two-dimensional, two-color playfield, you have a 3-D, multi-color full scrolling gridiron. The "men" on each team are made up of about 3 colors, and they even move like little men. The scrolling field is well done, but a little jerky. EA obviously sacrificed smooth scrolling to give us multi- colored players.

The game begins with a coin toss (of which you have no control of the outcome), and then the kickoff. You play the home team in blue uniforms, and the computer (or player 2) plays the visitor team in red uniforms. The most unique feature of this game is the ability to actually MISS a kick or a pass. In Starbowl, the kickoff would automatically be caught, as would the passes from the quarterback.

During game play, you have your choice of just about every play in the book - Offensive and Defensive. You can punt, blitz, pass, block a kick, handoff, lateral passes, and interceptions are all available to you - and more. The computer can even be tricked by moving your man in the approprite direction.

The documentation that comes with the disk is neat and well organized for most people. However, my copy of the documentation had no true description of each play. I have no idea what some of the plays are (I'm not a football nut). Maybe some of the pages got lost somewhere, or maybe EA just didn't put it into the manual. If you're not a football fan and can't follow a play, you will have some trouble in finding out what each play does. If you're a Monday Night Footbal fan, you'll get a real charge out of this one.

Overall, I recommend this game to any true football and computer lover. TF does an excellent job of simulating a football game, but I found it a little too complex for me. If you're looking for a simple game to pass (Get it?) the time away, you might want to get hold of a simpler program such as Starbowl Football or even Atari Football. If you're looking for a football game that you can really sink your teeth into, this is it.

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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

serving the Flint area ATARI users

the GAG crew:

Jim Steele President
Gil Merciez VP(16) and ST librarian
Matt Howe VP(8) and Print librarian
Jerry Cross 8 bit disk librarian
Jim Tuma 8 bit disk librarian

Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Next Meetings
October 8, '86 6:30pm <elections>
October 25 '86 9:30am <Saturday session>
November 12 '86 6:30pm <Swap meet>
November 22 '86 9:30am <Saturday session>
December 10 '86 6:30pm
<no December Saturday session scheduled>

Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut School, 2010 Crestbrook Dr. in Flint. Meetings start at 6:30. We also have a 9:30 am bull session on the fourth Saturday of most months during the school year. Come on out and say hello!
Membership is $10 per year. If paying by check, it should be payable to Jim Steele.

Presidential mumblings for October.
by Jim Steele

Welcome back to more insanity from GAG's fearless leader. This month the hot news is Atari has announced that it's going public with a stock offering. The press release I saw was just an announcement of their filing "intent" papers with the securities and exchange commision, but it's a good sign for the future. I guess they need some investment capital to get the "TT" off the ground,eh?

Back from the world of high finance, October is officer election month. I suppose that it will be an "officer drafted" month instead. Feel free to run against any of us on the masthead. A little new blood never hurts. As of this writing I personally am not sure if I can run again. I finally made the big plunge to that <other> 68000 system. I don't plan on putting my 800x1 in the closet, it still does useful work for me. Oh well, decisions, decisions.

In other news, keep your wallets handy for the November meeting. We're having our biannual swap meet. Come on out and buy or sell just in time for Christmas... (already?) In October, after the elections I will show Accolade's "Hard Ball" a baseball simulator for the 8-bitters (If I can improve my embarassing score!) If there's anything else you people want to see, be sure to let us know!

One last thing, and I'm sure you have heard it too often, "This is your newsletter" Let's get some of you out there writing! Share your thoughts with the friendly folk in Lansing, Jackson, and maybe even the Huron valley. One more last thing about the newsletter. This publication is partly funded by advertising. If you can, drop in to our advertisers and "say you saw it in the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine".

til next time, -Jim

Disk Library

GAG Library Offerings...
by Jerry Cross

Let's get some business out of the way. First, I tried to put it off as long as I could. But it's time to face the music. Because of a dip in sales, and the future plans of the club, I will be raising the price of GAG disks to $2.50 starting in October. Part of the money will be used to repair the Indus drive the club purchased for copying library disks. It's acting a bit funky and needs some attention.

We are also planning some things for the coming year such as software purchases, and maybe even a hardware library. We already have a 1030 modem that members can borrow to see what it's like to communicate over the phone lines. I would like to see this continue.

Also, there will be an Atari convention in Detroit next year, and we could use a few dollars to set up a booth. But that's still a long ways away.

But it's not all that bad. I plan to put out some bonus disks, and maybe an occasional 2 for 1 month. Once we get a handle on the finances I'll get started on that.

Sy-Draft has now opened up a store in the Flint area. Since this is one of the places I have purchased blank disks, and since their price is hard to beat, I will not be selling blank disks any more. We started selling blank disks as a service to the members because we could get a better price buying in bulk. But since you can now buy disks for under 50 cents (I saw some recently for 10/$3.70!) there is no need to continue selling disks.

I am still working on an updated catalog. Hopefully, you will have it by the time you read this. As of this writing, it is all ready for copying, but the xerox machine at work has been broken. It may be necessary to have it done by a printer. Anyway, I'm still working on it.

OK, on to the good stuff. With the large amount of trading with CHAOS and TAG (Tri-City Atari Group) I have tons of great material to put out. Printshop fans are in for another treat. GAG disks 139 and 140 contain more Printshop icons. And Disk 149 contains a nifty program called IconShop. This program uses either a joystick, koalapad, or mouse, to draw Printshop icons. It features many of the commands that are on the Koala software, such as mirror, fill, and textured colors, cut-n-paste, circles and squares. Also on that disk are some Printshop utilities like PSPIC3, which converts a Screen Magic file from Printshop format to Atari dos, and allows you to place icon pictures on it. Also on this disk is PSFCONV, which converts the pictures to Atari format. You can then use PSFLOAD to load these pictures into your basic programs. It uses CIO commands, and you may need to dig through your old Analog mags for issue #17 for instructions on this. This disk also contains a scrunched file containing even more Printshop icons. Once "unscrunched" you will have another disk, and it will be in Printshop format (no need to convert them with Shoptool). Most of these icons were drawn by GAG member Dave Pettitt.

This month seems to be Graphic and Music month. Disk 142 is full of Koala pics, and 143 has more AMS files. Something a bit different can be found on disk 144. This is a 2-sided disk containing 4 Parrot sound digitizer files. These files are very large, and really show off the sound from the Atari's. It play's a short music recording that was digitized using the Parrot hardware. This is one of those "it sounds nice but what else can it do" programs, but it's worth the money.

Disk 145 is full of great graphic demos. Check out the OIL demo on disk 148. This is a public relations demo from England showing how oil is drilled and processed. Very imformative, and great graphics! This disk also contains the GOSDOS program you may have heard about (Graphics Operating System). This is an early version of a joystick controlled dos, but has several bugs and doesn't seem to be complete. But it's interesting to look at.

For you MPP users, disk 142 contains a BBS program based on the popular "Forum" program. I haven't found a volunteer to test it out for bugs, so you are on your own. This program is written in basic, and comes complete with sample files.

For utilities, this month you will find RepairShop, a nifty program that can repair some basic programs that don't seem to load. I tried it out on a file and it loaded ok, but the file still had a bug. This program just repairs the file, it doesn't de-bug it. I also found a disk index program that supports all densities, and holds up to 1000 records. It has a very fast sort routing, and many other features. Also, there is another word processing program called TED (Text EDitor). This program has limited features, but does have some interesting points. First, you can use inverse and graphic characters. It uses the standard Atari editing keyes, and will support "Insert" mode. The screen will scroll from left to right to give the impression of a 130 character line! This may come in handy for spreadsheets or plain 80 column printing.

In the games department, we have a couple programs that were written by GAG member Ed Kalush (he also did the new cover screen for the disks). Your librarian overlooked these programs for 3 months before uncovering them. Sorry about that. I won't talk about the Koala disk I lost two times. Nicole Hobb's Koala pics will be out next month for sure! Sorry, but Mrs. Hanners private collection will remain "private" (inside joke if you attended the last meeting).

Whew, that's a lot of disks! I'm sure there is something in this mess you can use. See you next month.

GAG DISK CATALOG
OCTOBER
==========

DISK # 139 FULL DISK OF PRINTSHOP ICONS

DISK # 140 FULL DISK OF PRINTSHOP ICONS

DISK # 141 FOREM MPP BBS PROGRAM

DISK # 142 FULL DISK OF KOALA PICTURES

DISK # 143 FULL DISK OF AMS MUSIC FILES

DISK # 144 FULL DISK (2 SIDES) OF PARROT SOUND DIGITIZED MUSIC FILES.

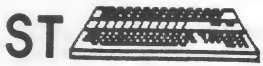
DISK # 145 GRAPHIC DEMOS
-RATOWN, DONG, SEASCENE ARE BINARY LOADED DLI PICTURES.
-FIRE DISPLAYS A FIRPLACE DEMO.
-MUSTGON, MATHART1,2 SHOW GRAPHIC PROGRAMMING TECHNIQUES.
-STRETCH WILL DISTORT YOUR PICTURE FILES (ANTIC)
-COKE, ADEMO, RUNBOY ARE GREAT GRAPHIC DEMOS.
-SIDWIND DEMO'S HOW TO GET SCROLLING MESSAGES.

DISK # 146 GAMES
-FOOTBALL IS A TEXT FOOTBALL GAME. PLAY 1 OR 2 PLAYERS.
-BLCKJACK IS AN IMPROVED CARD GAME
-BUNK (DICE GAME) AND FOUR (SCORE FOUR) WRITTEN BY GAG MEMBER ED KALUSH.
-SCULL IS A "TAG" TYPE GAME. NEED A JOYSTICK.
-CRYATAL IS A SPACE ARCADE GAME.

DISK # 147 UTILITIES
-REPAIRST FIXES BAD BASIC FILES
-SYNCOPY IS A DISK COPY PROGRAM
-BFLAS BINARY FILE UTILITY
-COL80 IS AN 80 COLUMN HANDLER
-TED IS A LIMITED FEATURE WORD PROCESSOR. GIVE IT A TRY!
-INDEX IS A DISK CATALOG PROGRAM THAT WORKS ON ALL DENSITIES.
-BOOKEEPR IS A HOME BOOK KEEPING PROGRAM.
-MULTIFORM FORMATS MULTIPLE DRIVES.

DISK # 148 GOS DOS
-GRAPHIC OPERATING SYSTEM
-OIL, A GREAT GRAPHIC DEMO AND A LOOK AT OIL PRODUCTION.

DISK # 149 ICONSHOP
-CREATE PRINTSHIP ICONS USING THIS KOALA TYPE SOFTWARE. LOTS OF FEATURES.
-PSLOAD AND PSCONV WILL TRANSFORM PRINTSHOP SCREEN MAGIC FILES TO ATARI DOS TO USE IN YOUR BASIC PROGRAMS.
-PSPIC TRANSFORMS PRINTSHOP SCREEN MAGIC FILES TO ATARI DOS AND OVERLAYS ICONS ON THE PICTURE.
-PSPICS IS A SCRUNCH DISK CONTAINING MORE PRINTSHOP PICTURES WRITTEN BY GAG MEMBER DAVE PETTIT.



ST NEWS FOR FLINT

Sorry I had to miss the September regular meeting. While the tornado sirens were blaring, I was visiting my daughters' teachers at a school open house. We will just have to make up for it in October.

A funny thing thing happened as I was writing this month's articles. I totally blew up a disk directory. Destroyed beyond recognition, it showed my disk contained 121 files of 11 bytes each dated 1/11/80 all named with the symbol of a musical note.

Unfortunately, I had just finished and saved the ST Corner column on that disk. Don't panic! The words of Douglas Adams rang in my head as I sat scratching my balding head trying to figure out what went wrong. At last I discovered the problem. The infamous loose chip syndrome had reared its ugly head just as I was saving my file.

Thanks to sector editors, disk doctors, and disk utilities I was able to find the sectors which contained the article and salvage the file. It did give me some anxious moments, however, and the reconstructive surgery took forever.

THINKING ABOUT OCTOBER

It's only the middle of September and I haven't even started to think about what might be in store for GAG ST owners for the October meeting. If you showed up for the Saturday session, we will have talked about it and then you'll know more than I do at this point. If that sounds confusing, that's because it is!

What I really need is a volunteer to help me better coordinate the ST happenings. My time, especially in the fall, is limited. Any volunteers?

I've just heard from Jerry Cross that Sy Draft is opening a store in Flint on Corunna Road near Linden. For those who are familiar with Sy Draft's other store in Southfield, you'll know that he stocks a wide variety of ST software at prices that rival mail order

houses. It's just what we need in the Flint area.

LIBRARY NOTES

October's meeting will see at least three new disks added to the ST library. One disk will be packed with pictures in Tiny format. Many of these pictures were winners in Antic's contest and are really worth having. Another disk will contain a new version of ST Writer version 1.07. This version fixes most of the bugs in the original release and includes rewritten documentation that is much better than the original.

There is also a version 1.50 (not to be confused with version 1.5 which has a few reported bugs) floating around which goes even further. If I can locate it, it will be on the same disk. Also on the ST Writer disk is a nifty little print spooler program that reserves 33K of memory to buffer the much slower printer. Print spoolers can save you a lot of time if you do a lot of printing, especially when dumping graphics.

A third disk will contain a mixture of demos, utilities, and other interesting tidbits. I have a playable chess demo from a program that will be released in November. It plays incredibly stupid chess but will give you a good idea of what the released version will look like. Also included on this disk is a working demo of Solapak, which is a combination print spooler, ram disk, and screen capture accessory that takes an incredibly small amount of memory due to it's optimized assembly language. There is a GEM version of the ubiquitous Life program as well as a Checkers game written in Personal Pascal. It should be an interesting disk.

This disk was also going to contain the 0.9 version of NEO. It seems that someone uploaded this greatly expanded version of NEO to Genie and Delphi a few weeks back. There was some initial confusion about whether it was meant to be placed in the public domain. Finally Atari decided that it was never meant to be released and requested that it be removed from the download sections. In good conscience I can't really put it on a library disk and should probably destroy my copy. Atari feels that releasing this version will hurt the sales of the final version which will be a commercial product.

I can say that NEO is looking better and better. There have been many added features since the .5 version shipped with all ST's. Circles, squares and other shapes can now be drawn with ease. A grid feature makes it much easier to line up objects. X-Y coordinates of the drawing pen can be toggled on and off. Portions of pictures can be saved in source format for later inclusion in your own programs. The final release of NEO should be quite good.

That's it for this month. Hope to see you at the October meeting and don't forget the Saturday workshops on the fourth Saturday of the month. All meetings are at Neithercutt school. If you have any comments or suggestions you can leave me a message on FACTS (313-736-3920). Jerry should have his hard drive fixed by the time you read this.

ST Review

THE WRITTEN WORD
By: Gil Merciez

The Mid Michigan Atari Magazine isn't the only new magazine to hit the streets in the past few months. STart's second issue follows closely on the heels of the premier edition of Compute's Atari ST.

STart's first issue in June met some mixed reviews. It certainly lived up to its initial claims of being geared toward the professional programmers. It contained some heavy duty articles with a major emphasis on C programming techniques that were probably over the heads of the vast majority of ST owners.

Personally, although I didn't understand most of the programming nitty gritty, I found the first issue of STart to be just what the ST world needs. It contained little fluff and lots of solid information. My only complaint is the somewhat stiff $14.95 price tag which includes the program disk. A subscription for this quarterly costs $59.95 but also includes a free year of ANTIC ($28) to buffer the steep cost. B. Dalton's carries the magazine without the disk for $4. STart will be available this way in limited quantities for the forseeable future.

The second issue is substantially larger than the first and continues in its high powered user style although I did notice just a tad of softening around the edges. There is an excellent comparison article of the five major

C compilers as well as another comparison of 7 word processors for the ST with a chart showing how they stack up in 90 different features. The enclosed disk is chocked full of programming examples, source code, a few applications and demos, Xlisp 1.5, and a Reversi desk accessory. STart looks like it will become MUST reading for serious ST owners.

Compute's Atari ST debuted with a much lighter style. Weighing in at a somewhat meager 80 pages, this $12.95 bimonthly magazine and disk combo will probably appeal to a wider audience. There seemed to be a major emphasis on ST news, gossip and rumors, reviews, and lighter type features. It follows closely the format of Compute magazine.

Compute's Atari ST is not available without the disk. The first issue's disk was barely half full, padded with a text file of Atari User Groups. Astro Panic!, a mildly interesting arcade game written in C, is the highlight of the disk. The magazines's annotated program listing of Astro Panic! which is heavily interspersed with comments and explanations will prove useful to those who like to study code.

I also enjoyed Compute's Atari ST and am anxious to see how it evolves with each succeeding issue. Just be thankful you don't live in Canada and have to pay $17.95 for it.

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PIRATE PATROL

THE HUNT CONTINUES...
(excerpted from ZMAGAZINE 9/86)

In Los Angeles on September 4th, a former University of Southern California student was sentenced to two years in prison following conviction on charges that he illegally gained access to the school's computer three times to change his grades. The man, 28-year-old Mehrdad Amini of Beverly Hills, was alleged to be a leader of a grade-tampering ring involving as many as 43 students at USC. According to The Associated Press, Amini had faced up to four years and four months in prison.

In Baltimore, police have seized two computer systems they say were used by computer intruders to locate and sell private long-distance telephone codes of customers of MCI Telecommunications Inc. Investigators were able to trace the alleged computer crackers with new anti-fraud software installed in MCI's switching system.

Police seized computers, printers, modems, records and intrusion programs. "They probably have hundreds of people who tap into their system," said police, so the investigation "will be an ongoing thing until people get the message."

Long-distance telephone fraud has cost the industry more than $500 million annually.

Authorities are blaming computer crackers for running up a $107,000 telephone tab for Jessica Barnett of Orlando, Fla., during the last three months.

According to UPI, the 28-year-old housewife contacted MCI Telecommunications Corp. in Atlanta shortly after opening the 400-page, two-inch thick bill.

Mrs. Barnett said she thought things were straightened out when she did not get a bill last month. However, the bill that arrived Monday included $70,000 in past-due charges. MCI told the Barnetts to, uh, ignore the bill.

Review

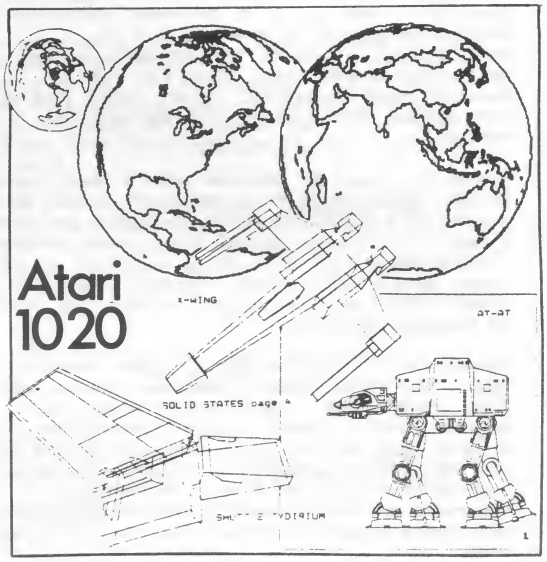
ATARI 1020 PRINTER/PLOTTER
Reviewed by John Nagy

The mighty midget printer, the ATARI 1020, was built to sell for around $150 and can be bought mail order today for about $30. That fact alone should be a motivator for most of us knee-jerk bargain hunters. But there are even better reasons to jump at this deal- the printer is amazing!

Imagine being able to plot out 3-D cad-type pictures in four colors, any scale, any rotation... then add lettering in ANY SIZE you specify, even ROTATING the print sideways or upside down. Perfect for charts, graphs, or just doodling. Outstanding for KOALA pic dumps in full color. And able to handle 80-column printing too!

Sure, the 4.5" roll paper is small, and in 80 columns, the print is TEENY-TINY, but the detail and control is PERFECT. Sure, the thing is SLOW (don't plan to list a 48K program to it twice in the same evening), but ANY printer for $30 (especially one that plugs in without an interface, just like a disk drive) is incredable.

CHAOS has used one for over 2 years on the BBS as the system logger. It plows out about 3-4 feet of paper every day, every month, and never missed a word until I forced some of the wrong paper into it (clever move, eh?). Even then, the reapir was easy... but for $30, we can afford to have a spare!



ART FROM BATTLE CREEK ATARI GROUP

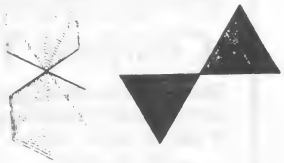
Get one of these mighty mites while they last- even if you have a top of the line printer, this one will do things you never thought of. Perfect for a hard-copy lister on your second system, or, if you have NO other printer, far better than NOTHING ever could be.

C.H.A.O.S. 1020 Plotter Disk
Summarized by Sally Nagy

C.H.A.O.S. Utility Disk C16 contains many utilites and demos for the remarkable little ATARI 1020 printer/plotter. Here's a quick look at some of the best on the disk:

KOALAPLT lets you print Koala Tablet or Graphics 8 pic files on your 1020. Once the picture is loaded, push the select key and a small color menu appears where you can change the colors of your picture. Once satisfied with the color push Start. Pictures with a lot of detail can take as long as an hour to plot.

KOALAPLT



TRIGART

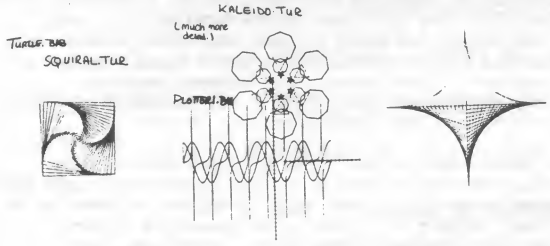
TRIGART gives you numerous patterns which are plotted. When promted by the program, input 4 numbers and wait for the new creation to appear. This is a one color plot.

The programs DRAW1020, SHOW1020 and TAPERUN.SYS are used together to use the Joystick to draw pictures that you can plot or view with SHOW1020. The file called SKETPAD.DOC explains these programs in more detail.

DIR1020 prints a 4 column super-mini directory listing of any Dos Disk.

PSF1020 prints a 4 column listing of Print Shop Graphics Disks.

EZ1020 helps you gain more control of your plotter. You are able to choose between graphics and write modes. You can pen colors, create different size print, rotate text, and many other functions from easy menus.



TURTLE.BAS, TURTLE.DOC, SQUIRAL.TUR(1 COLOR PLOT), KALEIDO.TUR(4 COLOR PLOT). Turtle 1020 is an interpreted language written in Atari Basic. The interpreter is a mixture of Pilot, Logo and Basic Commands. Read TURTLE.DOC for how to use these programs.

PLOT1020.DOC is a tutorial on mastering the 1020 plotter. It gives a summary of text and graphics commands.

PLOTTER1.BAS DEMO shows how the functions of SIN, COS and TAN look when plotted.

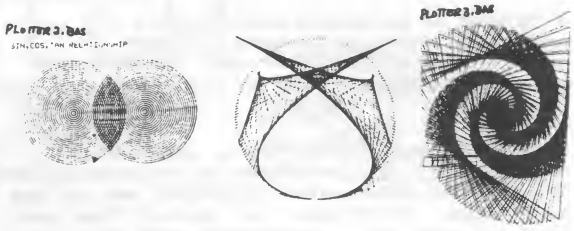
PLOTTER2.BAS DEMO draws two groups of concentric circles which cross each other.

PLOTTER3.BAS DEMO draws spiraling triangles.

PLOTTER4.BAS DEMO draws two squares and connects each of the corners with a line.

PLOT1.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT, MORE DESIGNS)

PLOT2.BAS(4 COLOR GRAPH)



PLOT3.BAS(1 COLOR PLOT, DIAMOND CUT IN TWO)

PLOT4.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT)

XYAXIS(GRAPH AXIS)

POSTRMRK.DOC, POSTRMK makes a cut and paste Koala Pic, 8 X 11, 3 strips. This takes about 1 hour to plot the picture of one color.

Also included:
SAMPLE.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT)
RANDOM.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT, plus OPTIONS)
TRIANGLE.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT)
TRIANG2.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT)
GRAPH.BAS(1 COLOR PLOT)
COLOR.BAS(4 COLOR PLOT).

These files are found on C.H.A.O.S. Utility Disk C16.

Atari Technical

HINTS FOR ALL ATARI USERS
Collected by John Nagy

ATARI is acknowleging their console button problems on the XE series. A technical bulletin released July 25 says, essentially, to replace R95 (a 220 Ohm resistor on the main circuit board) with a 1K Ohm, 5% resistor, as well as a piece of tape as a shim under the console key area of the flex cicuit inside the keyboard and careful cleaning inside the keyboard. This is reported to work, but not as reliably as the circuit printed in the CHAOS newsletter a few months back. That revision adds three 3K Ohm resistors to the back of the circuit board, one each from the ground connection (pin 3 of the keyboard connector as seen from the top) to pins 21, 22, and 23 of the keyboard connector.

Opening the keyboard on your XE series ATARI can aggravate another common problem: a set of keys other than the console keys fails. This is due to a broken trace on the flex circuit inside the keyboard itself. The fix is to find the break, clean the area carefully, then apply

a "bridge" of conductive paint to make the repair. A bottle of Commonly available automotive REAR DEFROSTER WIRE REPAIR is perfect. Be neat, and let it dry before reassembly.

ATARIWRITER BLUES: Many early copies of ATARIWRITER PLUS have defective dictionaries. Try to check words after "BLOOMERS" and you get error flags. ATARI says just contact them, and they will send you a replacement disk, no return or proof of purchase required.

Some of us are slightly horrified to discover ATARIWRITER PLUS operates from a built-in version of DOS 2.5. That means it FORMATS a 1050 into the alien "DENSITY AND-A- HALF", and CANNOT be used in true double density! Yuk. Well, you can get out of this mess by replacing the DOS on your ATARIWRITER PLUS disk. Yes, even though it is copyprotected and will not show you a directory (from itself), there is a normal set of DOS, DUP, etc.files on the disk! If it is a little scary to do it to your original copy, find someone who can back it up on some modified drive, then write your favorite DOS right to the ATARIWRITER PLUS disk. Don't worry when it gives you a "bad sector" error when it tries to write the DUP.SYS file, as it part of the copyprotection system, and DUP is unused by the ATARIWRITER PLUS program anyway. I used SMARTDOS, and presto, I have a true double density and auto-density changing ATARIWRITER PLUS... with no "1050" density nonsense! This works on BOTH the regular and 130XE versions. (NOTE: if the DOS you install does not support "AUTORUN.SYS" files, be sure to rename the AUTORUN on the ATARIWRITER PLUS disk to whatever name it must be to autoboot under your chosen DOS!)

ATARIWRITER has an undocumented ability to handle a modem! Provided a handler was booted in as an AUTORUN.SYS, you can SAVE to or LOAD from the modem by using "R: FILE" for the filename. Both ends of this transfer should be using ATARIWRITER and modems. The sender would SAVE, while the reciever would LOAD.

More ATARIWRITER+ problems! Although the manual is very specific about the NEED for every file to END with a RETURN, you probably still forget sometimes (I do!). What happens next? When you try to print the file, you get a mysterious "FILE LENGTH ERROR" at the bottom of the screen instead of printing. Just go add a RETURN and try again!

Some ATARI ST owners have found that they have printer problems. The computer thinks that the printer has printed, but the printer acts like nothing ever happened. Not a way to get much done! It seems the problem is that some printers present a load of such a type as to prevent the ST output from getting through. The printer port on the ST is driven by the SOUND CHIP (HUH?) and it appears that such a printer can even damage the chip after some time. The solution if you have this situation is to put a buffer in line with your printer. It costs a bit, but it works. The ST is fine feeding the printer buffer, and the buffer output matches the printer fine. We hope ATARI has corrected this in production by now.

An Undocumented use for the right mouse button on your ST is manipulate files in a non-active (background) window. You DO NOT need to click on the window! Just hold the RIGHT button down while clicking the LEFT as though the window WAS active WITHOUT reselecting windows.

Ever go blind trying to read your 8-bit screen during a long print or computation that allows the "attract" mode to begin? After about 7 minutes without a keystroke, the ATARI starts shifting colors and densities on the screen to prevent a "burn in" of the screen phosphors. If you need to see what's on the screen but are afraid to press a key for fear of upsetting the program, try pressing SHIFT/CONTROL/A. This combination is seen by the operating system as "a key was pressed, but I don't have any data from it". This brings the screen back to normal with no danger of a key command bouncing around in your procedure.

A quick way to get data or text into a disk file from DOS without a word processor uses the COPY function. Just copy from the screen to a file! Select "C", then when prompted "FROM, TO" type "E:,D:FILENAME.EXT". When you hit RETURN, your screen will blank. Begin to type, and use any and all normal editing functions, as well as returns. When you have a screen full of what you want, press CONTROL/3. This indicated an END-OF-FILE, and the screen (E:=EDITOR) is copied to the filename you gave. Note: ONLY that which is ON THE SCREEN will be in the file. If you scrolled off a few lines, they are GONE. You can also copy a screen to the printer (P:) or the modem (R:, provided a handler has been booted)!

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Programs

LOVE AT FIRST BYTE
By: Mathew S. Howe

Hello, my name as you can see is Mathew S. Howe and I am the vice-president of the 8 bit Atari sig for the Genesee Atari Group. I also write a monthly newsletter article (well at least I try to write one each month).

My articles are on advanced programming in BASIC. Several months ago I started a series of articles on programming player missile (P/M) graphics.

This month we are going to continue in the same series. But if you haven't seen the other articles don't just turn the page and read something else. There is hope. First if you know something about P/M graphics then you are here at the right time. If you would like to read the beginning of this series all the articles in the series are available on my BBS.

Love At First Byte is the name of my BBS and the number is 1-313-233-4226. It is 300/1200 baud and up 24 hours a day. The articles are in the databases (R command). Before we get into this months mysteries I would like to add that if you have questions about Atari computers or basic programming in general leave me a message on the BBS and I'll get you an answer as soon as possible (usually less than 24 hours). The more interesting questions become future articles to help other programmers.

As I mentioned earlier we are going to get into some of the more advanced features of P/M graphics. One of the things we are going to look at is the priority register the other thing we are going to explore is collisions. So lets get right into it.

Regular readers should have a copy of this saved on a disk (or tape) if you do not have it please type it in now.

```
10 REM SAVE "D:DEMO.BAS
20 GRAPHICS 7+16:A=PEEK(106)-24:POKE
106,A
30 POKE 54279,A:A=A*256
40 POKE 559,46:POKE 53277,3:POKE
53256,1
50 POKE 53248,50:X=50
60 FOR Q=A+512 TO A+640:POKE Q,0:NEXT
Q
70 POKE 704,216:READ B
80 FOR Q=A+542 TO A+549:READ B:POKE
Q,B:NEXT Q:Y=30
85 GOSUB 5000:GOSUB 9000:IMG=IMG1
90 OLDY=Y:OLDX=X:ST=STICK(0):IF ST=15
THEN 90
91 IF ST=10 OR ST=14 OR ST=6 THEN IF
OLDY>11 THEN Y=OLDY-1
92 IF ST=9 OR ST=13 OR ST=5 THEN IF
OLDY<99 THEN Y=OLDY+1
93 IF ST=9 OR ST=10 OR ST=11 THEN IF
OLDX>41 THEN X=OLDX-1
94 IF ST=5 OR ST=6 OR ST=7 THEN IF
OLDX<200 THEN X=OLDX+1
100 POKE 53248,X
110 IF X<OLDX THEN IMG=IMG1
120 IF X>OLDX THEN IMG=IMG2
210 B=USR(VP,IMG,A+512+OLDY,A+512+Y)
250 GOTO 90
1000 DATA 8,255,24,61,63,60,24,60,0
1010 DATA 8,255,24,188,252,60,24,60,0
5000 REM VIEW OF THE CITY
5020 SETCOLOR 0,0,14:SETCOLOR 1,8,4
5030 SETCOLOR 2,0,0:SETCOLOR 4,8,8
5040 COLOR 1:PLOT 159,95:DRAWTO
159,90:DRAWTO 0,90:POSITION
0,95:GOSUB 5170
5050 COLOR 2:PLOT 159,89:DRAWTO
159,40:DRAWTO 139,40:POSITION
139,89:GOSUB 5150
5060 PLOT 107,89:DRAWTO 107,35:DRAWTO
87,35:POSITION 87,89:GOSUB 5150
5070 PLOT 55,89:DRAWTO 55,75:DRAWTO
0,75:POSITION 0,89:GOSUB 5150
5080 COLOR 3:PLOT 127,89:DRAWTO
127,40:DRAWTO 108,40:POSITION
108,89:GOSUB 5160
5090 PLOT 75,89:DRAWTO 75,25:DRAWTO
50,25:POSITION 50,74:GOSUB 5160
5100 PLOT 75,74:DRAWTO 56,74:POSITION
56,89:GOSUB 5160
5110 PLOT 20,74:DRAWTO 20,55:DRAWTO
0,55:POSITION 0,74:GOSUB 5160
5120 COLOR 1:PLOT 140,30:DRAWTO
140,10:DRAWTO 90,10:POSITION
90,30:GOSUB 5170
5130 PLOT 60,20:DRAWTO 60,8:DRAWTO
15,8:POSITION 15,20:GOSUB 5170
5140 RETURN
5150 POKE 765,2:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
5160 POKE 765,3:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
5170 POKE 765,1:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
9000 LET VP=1536:REM VER POS ROUTINE
9005 RESTORE 9050
9010 FOR Q=0 TO 43
9020 READ D
9030 POKE VP+Q,D
9040 NEXT Q
9050 DATA 104,162,5,104,149,220,202,16,250,198,
20,198,222,160,0,177,224,170
9060 DATA 168,165,223,240,9,169,0,145,222,136,2
8,249,138,168,165,221,240,7,177,224,1
5,220,136,208,249,96
9070 REM USR(VP,IMG1,OLD LOC,NEW LOC)
9080 IMG1=VP+46:IMG2=IMG1+9
9090 RESTORE 1000:FOR Q=VP+46 TO VP+46+17
```

```
9100 READ D:POKE Q,D
9110 NEXT Q
10000 RETURN
```

Please save this file to disk for future use. Ok now that we have that done we are ready to add this months changes. Retype the following lines:

```
70 POKE 704,220:READ B:POKE 623,8
90 OLDY=Y:OLDX=X:ST=STICK(0)
95 IF B THEN X=OLDX
96 IF Y<99 THEN SOUND 2,200,2,4
220 C=PEEK(53252):IF C/2<>INT(C/2) THEN SOUND
0,100,6,6:B=1
230 IF C/2=INT(C/2) THEN SOUND 0,0,0,0:B=0
240 POKE 53278,255:SOUND 2,0,0,0
```

Also delete lines 5120 and 5130. You now have the program for this month's discussion. You may also save this file to disk. Remember to use a different name.

First let's talk about what we mean by priorities. A couple of months ago we drew a view of the city and we called the different colors playfields. Well in P/M graphics when we talk about priorities we mean which item will be displayed when a player overlaps a playfield. The default condition is players have priority over all playfields. Last month we saw this as the helicopter moving over the city and it never went behind a building. Ok that was neat but we want to fly our chopper between the buildings just like in real life. Well that is where priorities come in. We can set our priorities so that some will cover the player while some appear behind the player. There are two locations that control priority. One is 53275 the other is 623. Now 53275 is the location of the register in the ANTIC chip that actually controls the P/M graphics and is reset by the system on a regular basis so Atari provided a "shadow register". The shadow register is used by the operating system to reload the ANTIC chip after a reset, The shadow register is location 623. There are several things controlled by this location but right for now we are going to concern ourselves with just the basic priorities we have been discussing. So in priorities there are just 4 different cases and they are:

PRIORITY	VALUE
ALL THE PLAYERS THEN ALL THE PLAYFIELDS	1
PLAYERS 0 AND 1 THEN THE PLAYFIELDS THEN PLAYERS 2 AND 3	2
ALL THE PLAYFIELDS THEN ALL THE PLAYERS	4
PLAYFIELDS 0 AND 1 THEN ALL THE PLAYERS THEN PLAYFIELDS 2 AND 3	8

I chose the last case for a value of 8. I chose 8 because it would allow us to fly behind 0 and 1 and in front of 2 and 3. As you may remember 0 is the clouds and ground, 1 is the lighter buildings, 2 is the darker buildings. I have not mentioned the background yet because it always has the last priority, meaning that everything shows over the background. After all isn't that why they call it the background? In line 70 we add a poke 623,8 this sets the priorities. Try it it works real well. Simple too! Line 96 starts a chopper sound if we are above the ground and the second half of line 240 finishes the sound. We will talk more about sound in a future article so if you do not understand the sound statement don't worry about it.

The next thing we add this month is a little more involved. There are several collision registers each detecting a different type of collision. What we are interested in are collisions between player 0 and the playfields. They are stored in a register at 53252. In all the player to playfield collision registers the value returned is a sum of the playfields you have overlapped. One of the clues here is "overlapped". collisions are only detected if you overlap the playfield. Below is a chart of the values returned when you peek a player playfield register:

PLAYFIELD HIT	VALUE
PLAYFIELD 0	1
PLAYFIELD 1	2
PLAYFIELD 2	4
PLAYFIELD 3	8

Remember I said that it held a sum of values so if we are half on playfield 0 and half on playfield 1 the value will be 3. I decided I wanted to know when we crashed (overlapped the ground). So I deleted the two lines that drew the clouds 5120 and 5130 and tested for collisions with playfield 0. We can see that all combinations of collisions except 0 give us a even number. Only playfield 0 gives an odd number so in lines 220 and 230 I do a C/2=INT(C/2) test to see if it is odd or even. if it is odd then I do a crash sound, if not, I do a stop sound. I also make B=1 if there is a collision and B=0 if no collision. I use B to decide if you can move sideways in line 95. The only other thing to remember on collisions is that the collisions registers will remember that collisions that have happened till reset. The way to clear ALL the collision registers is to poke 53278 with any number. So in line 240 we poke 53278,255. There is one last change that I put into the program and that is I took out the IF ST=15 THEN ... out of line 90. This makes sure that we look at the collision registers every time through the loop.

Well that about covers it for this month. I know we covered a lot of ground here and some of it pretty fast. But if you look at the listing I am sure you can figure out how it works, if not drop me a line and I'll show you more. Next month I am going to put some giant worms on the buildings and equip the chopper with a gun to shoot them. Till then...

Keep with the program.

Atari ST Rumours
by John J. Anderson
(excerpted from ZMAGAZINE 9/86)

Microsoft will provide Microsoft Write for the ST series. Write is based on the popular Microsoft Word, for the Macintosh. We are told that Microsoft Write will make full use of the powerful monochrome and color graphics capabilities of the ST.

Matthew Stern saw Write at the Southern California Atari FEST, and says: "It has almost all the features of the Macintosh version, including multiple documents, footnotes, page layout, and headers and footers. You can even highlight entire lines at a time, just like you can on the Mac version. It doesn't have split screens, and most importantly, does not (yet) support fonts and graphics." Atari plans to sell it for $125 to $150.

Also heard at the show was that Atari is wrapping up the official version of GDOS, the addition to GEM that supports high-resolution fonts and graphics. If you've used Easy Draw, you may already know how GDOS works. IT comes on a disk that adds fonts and graphics. The print quality is superb, even on a dot-matrix printer.

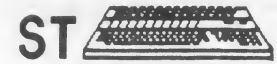
Have you had a chance to play with CAD-3D from Antic software? I have, and my problem now is finding a way to stop. The program, written by Tom Hudson (who wrote the magnificent Degas paint package), is a masterpiece in solid modeling *and* in ease of use. In about an hour, you can learn enough to experiment, create, and play for dozens of hours more.

CAD-3D provides powerful tools for creating three-dimensional objects -- and for viewing these objects from different angles, distances, and perspectives. You can view objects in wireframe (as if it was modeled out of pipecleaners); hidden line (hidden lines are removed); solid (objects are shaded, for a sculptured look); or outlined mode (a hidden line plot superimposed over a solid plot). In solid and outlined modes, you can control up to three "light sources," and create accurate, automatic shading.

The current program offers an animation module, but it necessarily slows in direct proportion to the complexity of the objects it depicts. A demo disk of an upgraded animation package-in-progress recently crossed my desk, and it is fantastic. It allows animation at up to ten frames per second, and packs an amazing amount of data onto a single disk.

The capper to all this is a forthcoming "stereo" option, allowing you to view objects in 3-D. Yes, it requires special glasses, but before you groan, realize that we are *not* talking about red-blue or even polarized glasses here. The package will utilize high-speed liquid crystal-shutter glasses, synched to the video scan of the ST monitor.

Rumor of the month: Our informed sources say there's a new computer coming from Atari in 1987, to be called the 2080 ST. If your first instinct tells you that the 2080 is an ST with twice the power of the 1040, you are probably right.



ST CORNER
By: Gil Merciez

A tentative and sheepish welcome to all the new readers of this long winded and overblown column. It will take some time to adjust to the new editorial deadlines. Where I come from we are used to a bit more immediacy. Using advanced telecommunication techniques and state of the art xeroxing methods, our old newsletter was generally in members' mailboxes before the print head of my trusty Gemini had cooled. Having to resort to professional printers using obsolete mechanical offset equipment necessitates about a 3-4 week lag not even considering the pony express speed of bulk mail. But that's the price you have to pay for a classy production.

SOME NOT SO ANCIENT HISTORY

Over the past year and a half I've been covering the ST world for the Genesee Atari Group. It was August 1985 when I relegated my battered 48K 400 to a minor corner of my desktop to make room for a shiny new 520 ST. By January the wheezing 8 bit was dispatched to a hidden corner of the closet and has not seen the light of day since.

It was quite a risk back in mid 1985 to commit to a new untested computer from a company near death's door. No software was available and the price was full retail. Pioneer ST owners remember eagerly snapping up some of the first commercial programs; Mudpies, the first in long string of releases from Pontiac based Michtron; Hex, a strategy game from Mark of the Unicorn; Express, a letter processor from the now bankrupt Mirage Concepts; and Chat 1.0, a buggy terminal program from SST Systems.

Very few of the early releases took advantage of the the GEM based features of the ST. Software development tools were poor and the learning curve for programmers was steeper than anticipated. I remember Tom Nelson of VIP Technologies telling me that during the development of VIP Professional, work came to a total standstill for over 3 weeks because the source code was too large to compile. They were stumped! Solid documentation for the operating system was non existent.

A squabble had erupted between Atari and Digital Research, the designers of the GEM interface and TOS, the ST's operating system. As a result Atari's own system programmers had to document a good deal of the operating system on their own, through trial and error, in attempting to fix the myriad of bugs in the early versions of TOS. The infamous Hitchhikers Guide to the BIOS, written internally at Atari, served as one of the most useful guides for outside developers.

In a rush to fill the software void many commercial releases were shipped with glaring and many times fatal bugs. First versions of VIP Professional were totally unusable. Habawriter had several fatal flaws. Most of Hippopotamus Software's early releases were sprinkled with obvious if not fatal bugs. Gradually, the software void began to fill. By mid year 1986 there were 200+ titles that had actually hit dealer shelves with more than twice that number close to completion. Just about every major category had been filled with at least a couple of entries. As the year draws to a close, ST owners are promised a flood of new releases to help relieve their bulging wallets of Christmas savings.

While the bugs have not disappeared (they probably never will), most products are now shipping relatively solid versions with bugs falling into the annoyance category.

Meanwhile, ST's have been quietly selling in a steady, if not spectacular, fashion. The user base has grown to a point where most publishers of home based software are now supporting the ST with much more than a few token releases. Many secondary IBM and MacIntosh software houses are also testing the ST market with serious business and specialized application packages. The Tramiel Atari Corp. is now claiming across the board profitabity for 1986 with all the dead wood from the old Warner years behind it. Research and development on the ST is continuing at a healthy pace with many enhancements in the works including the TT 32 bit series. The future of the ST seems secure. My gamble has paid off.

PHILOSOPHY

With that bit of history behind me, it's on to the task at hand. I no longer feel compelled to play the role of an ST booster blind to the inadaquacies of both software and hardware. There are too many products on the market to squander precious dollars on losers. Hopefully, some of my comments in this column will save you some frustration in your software purchases. I am not a programmer and don't intend to become one. I don't have the time. I am interested in all sorts of applications and entertainment packages.

I firmly believe in productivity software that is intuitively obvious in its use, does not require a large investment in time and talent to learn, yet does not sacrifice power and performance. I realize this is a tall order, but as a consumer this is what I demand.

Most of the powerful software on the market seems to be either written or documented for programmers, systems analysts, and other techie types. Programmers often forget or don't realize that the end user of their product does not have a degree in Computer Science. Documentation is most often written by a programmer or one who is so intimate with the software development that too much is taken for granted. A good piece of programming can be crippled by inadaquate instructions.

As far as entertainment packages go, I look for substance over flash. Dazzling graphics are but one small part of enjoyable game playing. If the game becomes tedious, impossibly difficult, or lacks depth then it will quickly end up on an out of the way shelf.

In a nutshell, I look for how much bang for the buck I get from my software purchases. After all, isnt't that why we all bought the ST? Power without the price? We paid the price now let's see if we can find that elusive power. End of philosophy.

WINDING DOWN

The list of "Real Soon Now" software is piling up rapidly prior to the Christmas selling season. Next month I'll take a look at some of the new releases that are cluttering my desk.

One new release I've just started to look at is Regent Base from Regent Software ($99). A

database program that seems to be more powerful than DB Master One but not as complex as DBMAN. I may have a better feel for Regent Base next month if I can find the time to play around with it.

I just wish some enterprising developer would find a way to code a program that suspends time. It would be a perfect addition to my Auto folder.

The Following Review is presented through the courtesy of Compuserve's DL7 Section:

ATARI PLANETARIUM REVIEW
By: Dick Brudzynski 76703,2011

New! From Atari! In the privacy of your own home, you can TRAVEL IN TIME! Unbelievable? Wait, there's more! You can WARP SPACE! That's right, travel to any point on the globe, explore distant planets and galaxies! Learn the SECRETS OF THE ANCIENTS! Share the thoughts of Aristotle, Ptolemy, and Thucydides. Navigate by the stars! Explore time and space! See the Star of Bethlehem and the Andromeda Galaxy! Make time run backwards! Stop the Sun and the Moon! Move the Earth on its axis! See through solid matter! Explore the mysteries of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh and the Stone Lion of Nimrud Dagh! Find your place in the wondrous miracle of the UNIVERSE itself! The price for all these powers -- a paltry $25.

The product -- Atari Planetarium!

The demo in my dealer's store was so impressive that I took home a new XE computer to run the software on. (It'll work on your XL as well--old 800 users will give serious consideration to upgrading when they see this product in action!) The Atari Planetarium turns your monitor into a window on a working model of the universe with more than 1200 stars, all 88 constellations, the eight planets, the sun and moon, and over 300 "deep sky" objects (other galaxies). You can enjoy the view from ANY spot on the planet at ANY time (day or night). That is ANY TIME--10,000 years into the future or 10,000 years into the past!

Using the Atari Planetarium is an impressive experience. When you boot up, you'll want to go to MAP mode and set your longitude and latitude by moving the cursor over a full screen world mercator map. Head for your home town, or Rome, or Pago-Pago, whatever sky interests you.

Now its time to go to SET mode to set the time on your local clock. The computer will handle all the complexities of converting for different time zones. Set the clock for tonight, tomorrow night, next century, or anytime within the previous or next ten milleniums. (I like to start off the evening by watching the sunset. The Atari Planetarium does an excellent job of moving from day through twilight to dark night. The folks who worked on this program understood the capabilities of the 8-bit Atari and used them well.)

Location and time set? OK, it's time to go to SKY mode and see what the skies will be like. You'll probably want to set the clock running so you can follow the path of the stars across the sky during the evening. Atari Planetarium will let you adjust the clock to run as fast as 64X real time if you want to observe the evening's events in a few minutes.

SKY mode offers a wonderful array of options. You can toggle: LINES to display the outlines of the major constellations; NAMES to display the names of the constellations; SYMBOLS to display the planets; DEEP SKY to display those 300 other galaxies; TRACK to have the Planetarium follow the sun, moon, and any planet or constellation across the sky for you; and, SOUND to change your crosshair cursor to a "space shuttle" which will rocket across the sky with the appropriate sound effects.

My son enjoys docking the shuttle with a star or planet and then accessing the Planetarium's data base to learn about it. DATABASE? That's right! The flip side of the Planetarium disk contains a database with a few lines of text on each object displayed by the Planetarium. Press the HELP key or joystick button for a short education on anything that attracts your eye.

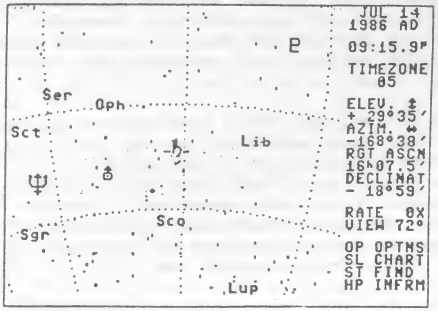
Your "window on the universe" has a field of view of 72 degrees. The Planetarium comes with a "zoom" function that will expand the detail in steps up to 8 times. The detail in the Planetarium is so good that, when zooming in on certain stars, they'll resolve themselves into double stars! The Atari Planetarium is a pretty good telescope! Looking for something special? A press on the START key will make sure you FIND it.

The Atari Planetarium will automatically shift your field of view to find any planet or constellation you select. You can find out when and where Mars, Venus, Pegasus, or whatever will be quickly and easily. The SKY screen displays the right ascension and declination of the object your cursor is on as well as the much more useful elevation and azimuth. Even a rank amateur such as myself

has no trouble finding the actual star in the sky after looking it up on the Planetarium. (A good pair of 7X50 binoculars or a telescope will be necessary for faint objects.)

You can quickly navigate around your sky by moving the cursor, and using the N, E, S, and W keys. An "O" command will show you if your favorite planet will be brightly illuminated because it's "in opposition" to the sun.

Phases of the moon are correctly shown as are the effects of the moon passing in front of a star or planet.



The Planetarium will put on a hell of a good eclipse for you. One evening, my son and I watched a solar eclipse reported by Cicero on June 21, 400 B.C. and a lunar eclipse reported by Thucydides in 413 B.C. (The lunar eclipse cost the Athenians a war.)

A CHART mode will allow you to generate star charts on your EPSON FX80 with GRAFTRAX or ATARI XMM801 (if you can find an XMM801).

As you can see, Atari Planetarium is a BUSY program; it's trying to do a lot with 8-bits. Suprisingly, the Atari shows no sign of strain under the tremendous load placed upon it by all the program's functions. Every function called is performed promptly and with suprisingly little hesitation. Somebody knew what they were doing.

The documentation is superlative! It does a good job of explaining how to use the program, but the programmer made THAT part easy. The best part of the 115 page, spiral-bound manual is the entertaining and informative adult introduction to the pleasures of astronomy. In addition to presenting the fundamentals, it provides an introduction to stellar navigation and archeo-astronomy. There are plenty of examples and "experiments" for your family to enjoy. Explore the Great Pyramid and the Stone Lion, you'll soon be wondering about Stonehenge! The documentation also features an index, glossary, bibliography, tech notes for "serious" astronomers, and lots of useful tables.

Atari Planetarium is a great piece of software for those of us who've ever looked up into the night sky and wondered what was out there. For parents, it's a great activity to share with your children. For teachers, the documentation alone will provide you with a week of classes and the program's speed will make sure your classes don't get restless.

For folks who enjoy impressive software, you can't do better! Frankly, the name "Atari Planetarium" is much too modest; I never saw a planetarium that could find a planet for you or print star charts. Some more impressive name is warranted for this product such as "The Stellar Spreadsheet", or "Universal Database," or a "Star Processor." Atari Planetarium and its excellent manual were developed and written by DELTRON Ltd. Nice work fellas and gals!

Atari Planetarium loaded and ran without problems on my Indus and 1050 drives. It would not run on a 1050 drive equipped with a U.S. Doubler.

Fletcher Memorial Hospital BBS
Lansing, MI
By: Randy Pearson

If your life is missing a little weirdness, and you'd like a little fun, look no further.

My name is Randy Pearson, and I run the only other Atari bulletin board in town, called the Fletcher Memorial Home. (If that name doesn't ring a bell, then what about Magrathea? That's the original name.)

Fletcher Memorial is set up a bit different than most BBSs. It's "theme" is that of, well, a crazy farm. But there's quite a bit to do at the Home.

Probably the thing people call for the most, if not for the message base, is for the humor files. In the Rubber Room, option -=>H<=-, you will find nearly 20 humorous stories, written by myself, and other users, funny articles from books, magazines, etc, and many other interesting, amusing concepts.

FM's Message base is indeed one of the livelier ones around, with discussion ranging from serious (like the existence of God, re-incarnation, and drive-in funeral homes) to funny (like taking an imaginary trip in search of the 'Dale of Diamonds') to just plain weird (like the dreaded Jelly Doughnut revolution of '85). So there is something for everyone.

Other interesting 'rooms' to look into are the <W>riter's Block, where there are short stories, and a novel I wrote, the <S>urvey section, the <E>ntertainment wing, with ATASCII and ASCII pictures, a thought for the Week, and even an online game in the works, <R>eviews of movies, and other worthwhile endeavors.

The Home is run using an Atari 800 with the 288K upgrade, (meaning a 240k RAMdisk), and a couple Atari 1050 disk drives, one in double density. The software is none other than Nite Lite, a menu-driven system (similar to the TBBS software used by Political Forum, LSJ-A, etc.) written by Paul Swanson.

If you're wondering why I haven't mentioned the download section yet, it's because we don't have one. My policy is, if ya wanna have fun, come on over. If ya wanna take programs, call CHAOS. That's what it's here for.

The number for the Fletcher Memorial Home is (517) 646-9114, 24 hours a day, 300 baud. We are located in sunny Dimondale, Michigan, and proud of being the first and only BBS in this great city!

Even though the board is run on an Atari, it is open for all computers. ALL are welcome!

So, if you have a decent sense of humor, and can stand a bit of weirdness, give us a call. You'll be glad you did, really!

Randy Pearson
SysOp

VIEWPOINT

ANOTHER HABA RIPOFF?
By: Gil Merciez

Haba Check Minder (Haba Systems $75) was released several months ago as an easy to use checking account manager for the ST. Amazingly, the program worked as advertised. My main gripe about the program was its exorbitant price. Had it sold for a more reasonable $35-40, Haba Check Minder might have had a chance at being an extremely popular program for those interested in computerizing their checking accounts.

It covered all the bases in its specific task of handling a checkbook but was a far cry from a complete home accounting and budgeting system. I've been using it for the past five months and have found it very easy to use and bug free. As far as program performance, I only quibble with the insane use of the tab key rather than the return key to accept data within a field. Most of Haba's previous releases had been either bug ridden or insubstantial in content. All were grossly overpriced.

A year or so ago Haba purchased Continental/Arrays, a company known for The Home Accountant, a rather complete and highly acclaimed home bookkeeping system that had enjoyed wide popularity on most popular computers. Learning to use The Home Accountant on the 8 bit Atari was a cumbersome process. Written in BASIC, the program was slow in execution and required constant disk access while loading in various modules and accessing the data disk. It was powerful, however, restricted more by the memory and disk drive limitations of the 8 bit machines than anything else.

Toward the end of 1985 I had heard that The Home Accountant was being ported to the ST but that work was stopped on the project. No reason was given. Then a month ago Home Accountant from Haba appeared on dealer shelves. Was this "The" Home Accountant upgraded to take advantage of the power of the 68000 chip? Unfortunately, no.

Dropping the the "The" from the name, Haba simply upgraded the Check Minder program adding a budget module and the ability to track credit cards. Despite the fact that there is ten times the memory in the standard 520 ST, Haba could not find the room to fit all the features that were present in the 8 bit 48K Atari version of The Home Accountant. Absent are graphing options, cash transactions, and asset and liability accounts. You can't prepare a comprehensive balance sheet.

To my way of thinking, Haba is trying to cash in on a popular name to which they now own the rights. Rather than offer an upgrade to owners of Check Minder, they have released Home Accountant as an entirely new product. The documentation is nothing more than a reprint of Check Minder with an additional few pages scattered throughout to cover the two additional features. Amazingly, the price for Home Accountant is the same $75 as is charged for Check Minder. I would have thought they might double the price. Still it's shamefully overpriced. Ron Grimes authored both of the releases.

I've just heard a report (unconfirmed as of this writing) that Haba has laid off all their employees while waiting for revenues for their just released MacIntosh Haba Word to start rolling in. If the ST community is lucky, perhaps there will not be enough revenues to keep Haba afloat. We don't need publishers of this caliber. Maybe there is yet some justice in the world!

Industry News

NEWS OF THE WIRE
excerpted from ZMAGAZINE 9/86

CompuServe linked its EasyPlex facility with MCI Mail, enabling subscribers of either service to send mail to people on the other. MCI also linked up with the DEC Email service "All in One," so those users can also send mail to CompuServe users. Thus, if you subscribe to COmpuServe, DEC, or MCI, you can send electronic mail to over 500,000 people. (With MCI Mail, you can also send mail by computer that is printed and delivered as paper mail to anyone in the world.)

AT&T Mail, used mostly by corporate subscribers, has a MAILTALK feature that lets you listen to your messages over a touch-tone telephone. Punch in your user name and a password and you'll hear a synthesized voice read your mail. The tinny voice sounds a bit like the robot from Lost in Space -- "Danger, Will Robinson!"

Lower connect-time rates in 1986 made computer communications more affordable. American People/Link's rates for non-prime time (6 PM to 7 AM) are down to $4.25 an hour, and for local Chicago access this rate applies 24 hours a day.

There's no extra charge for 1200- or 2400-baud, and PLINK regularly announces special "Party/Line" rates of $3.49 an hour and "Happy Hours".

GEnie only charges $5 an hour for non-prime hours (300- and 1200-baud).

Delphi and QuantumLink charge $6 an hour for non-prime usage, even for 2400-baud. While you still pay $12.50 for 1200-baud usage on CompuServe, the system recently stopped charging for the connect time while you upload files in any of the data libraries.

CompuServe signed an agreement with two Japanese companies who will market and support the service in its existing form in that country. Right now there are only 750 subscribers in Japan. The two Japanese firms will also develop their own version of CompuServe in Japanese.

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Last Hacks

IMPURE MATHEMATIX - Wherein it is related how that Polygon of Womanly Virtue, young Polly Nomial (our heroine) is accosted by that Notorious Villain Curly Pi, and factored (oh, horrors!). (Author and original scource unknown but appreciated!)

Once upon a time (1/T) Pretty Polly Nomial was strolling across a field of vectors when she came to the boundary of a singularly large matrix. Now Polly was covergent and her mother had made it an absolute condition that she never enter such an array with undefined variables. However, Polly was irregular that morning and was feeling especially badly behaved. She ignored her mother's condition on the basis that it was insufficient, and made her way amongst the complex elements. Rows and columns closed in from all sides. Tangents approached her surface. She became tensor and tensor. Quite suddenly, two branches of a hyperbola touched her at a single point. She oscillated violently, lost all sense of directrix, and went completely divergent. As she reached a turning point, she tripped over a square root that was protruding from the erf and plunged headlong down a steep gradient. When she rounded off once more, she found herself inverted, apparently alone, in a non-euclidean space.

She was being watched however. That smooth operator, Curly Pi, was lurking inerproduct. As his eyes devoured her curvilinear coordinates, a singular expression crossed his face. He wondered, was she still covergent? He decided to integrate improperly at once.

Hearing a common fraction behind her, Polly rotated and saw Curly Pi approaching with his power series extrapolated. She could see at once by his degenerate conic and dissipative terms that he was bent on no good.

"Arcsin!" she gasped, covering her verticies.

"Ho, Ho," he said. "What a symmetric little asymptote you have. I can see your angles have lots of secs."

"Oh , Sir," she protested, "keep away from me. I haven't got my brackets on."

"Calm yourself, my dear," said our suave operator. "Your fears are purely imaginary."

"i, i, " she thouught. "Perhaps he's not normal, but homologous."

"What order are you??" the brute demanded.

"Seventeen," replied Polly.

Curly leered, "I suppose you've never been operated on."

"Of course not," Polly replied quite properly, "I'm absolutely covergent!"

"Come, come" said Curly. "Let's off to a decimal place I know and I'll take you to the limit."

"NEVER!!" gasped Polly.

"Abcissa!!!" he swore as undertook his plot, his patience gone. Coshing her over the coefficient with a natural log until she was powerless, Curly removed her discontinuities. He stared at her significant places, and began smoothing out her points of inflection. Poor Polly. The algorithmic method was now her only hope. She felt his hand tending toward her asymptotic limit. Her covergence would soon be gone forever.

There was no mercy, for Curly was a heavyside operator. Curly's radius squared itself; Polly's loci quivered. He integrated her by parts. He integrated her by partial fractions. After he cofactored, he performed Runge-Cutta on her. The complex beast even went all the way around and did a contour integration. Curly went on operating until he had satisfied her hypothesis. Then, he exponentiated and became completely orthogonal.

When Polly got home that night, her mother noticed that she was no longer piecewise continuous, but had been truncated in several places. But, it was too late to differentiate now. As the months went by, Polly's denominator increased monotonically. Finally, she went to the L'Hospital and generated a small but pathological function which left surds all over the place and drove Polly to deviation.

The moral of our sad story is this:
"If you want to keep your expression covergent, never allow them a single degree of freedom."

"I'm sorry, sir, but our computer is down."

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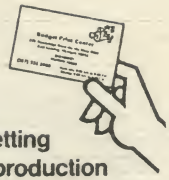

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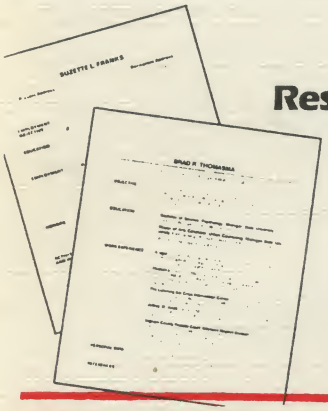

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Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

** ANTIC ONLINE GOES OFFLINE

10/20/86: This Item was the first new entry on the ANTIC ONLINE section of the COMPUSERVE ATARI SIG in over three months:

"As many of you have noticed, we have not recently updated ANTIC ONLINE. Due to being unable to reach a mutually acceptable contract with CompuServe, we have found it necessary to discontinue ANTIC ONLINE.

"We have found the experience to be informative and have made many friends. We thank you for your support and kind words. You can rest assured that we will be regular readers of SIG*ATARI, and where appropriate we will leave online messages.

"Our commitment to online publishing has not relaxed, and you can expect Antic to be a continuing information provider - as to where and when, watch ANTIC and START for further information." - Jim Capparell, Publisher

Just where does this leave the hundreds of small user groups that depended on ANTIC ONLINE every month to make up the bulk of their newsletter? It remains to be seen. Articles and reviews, ST information, and W.U.N. materials all came through ANTIC ONLINE, and were depended on by perhaps too many. It's up to the rest of us now - again.

Details of just what the problems were between COMPUSERVE and ANTIC may surface soon- we will keep you up to date.

It's just not turning out to be a good year for the big "C".

** ATARI HINTS AT A 520XE

Although announcements were conservative due to the public stock offering by ATARI CORP, hints were made at the Northern California Atari Expo that the future will include a 340XE and perhaps a 520XE computer. An XE memory management chip may also be offered to third party developers as early as January 1987. Still no release dates announced for the 1200 baud modem, the XEP80 80 column adaptor, or the 3.5 inch drives for the 8-bit line of ATARI computers. SOON is all they would say.

** MICROPROSE HOLD BACK GUNSHIP

Software developer MICROPROSE is said to be trying to decide whether to permanently shelve the long awaited "GUNSHIP for the 8-bit ATARI. It seems that they can't make the game do all that they want it to in only 48K, and they don't want to make it incompatible with the old 800 series of machines. Seems a real waste of the 64K in the XL and XE series of machines if programmers are afraid to use it!

** MICHTRON TO APPEAR AT SAGINAW MEETING

The nations best-known ST SOFTWARE developers, MICHTRON of Pontiac, Michigan, will be the featured guests of the T.A.G. user group meeting in November. President LEROY VALLEY says that MICHTRON will show items from their regular line, about-to-be released programs, and a look at some works-in-progress. Also, they plan to offer some REALLY CHEAP USED equipment to be sold at the meeting! It happens at 2:00 P.M. on November 8, at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library, corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw, MI. Leroy invites all ATARI enthusiasts to attend. Worth a drive!

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE: ICD CORP!

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

C.H.A.O.S.
Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

Rich Barnes - Managing Editor
MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
(517) 349-0513

Well, here we are again. We wish to welcome the Tri City Atari Users Group from the Saginaw, Midland, Bay City area of Michigan. Once again, our group has continued to grow. To those of you that are joining us for the first time, we welcome you and want you to know that this is your newsletter as well as ours.

We're into Fall with Thanksgiving and Christmas rapidly approaching. The time seems to be passing much too quickly, especially these past few months. This past month was very active with club activities and the Computer Show @ the Clarion. The members of those clubs attending, the dealers, and more importantly the patrons seemed to be enjoying themselves, possibly for different reasons. All things considered, this effort would have to be classified as a success.

As with any publication, much of the costs of publication is paid through advertisments from local and national dealerships and companies. We hope that you will support these advertisers by purchasing items from them, even mentioning the magazine from time to time. They, in a way, have made an investment in you and would appreciate knowing that they are receiving a return on their advertising dollars.

In order to grow and to prosper, we need advertising. If you are, or know of someone that would be interested in advertising in this publication, please give us a call 349-0513 or drop us a note on the CHAOS BBS 371-1106 or by mail. Our rates are reasonable and our readership is continuing to grow. In the near future, we hope to have a representative in each club that would coordinate advertising in their area. At the present time, if you have a question please contact us or your local club president. If you would like to help with the above, please let your club president know. Remember, the more advertising, the larger the issue that can be produced.

Article Submissions

Please limit articles to two pages in length per article. This amounts to approx. 11.5K including all spaces and blank lines between paragraphs. In this manner we may present the widest variety of topics within the allotted space.

Please leave a blank line between each paragraph, but do not indent the paragraph. We will also take care of the needed centering of

lines, so everything may be left justified. Please leave two spaces between each sentence.

Submission may be made by:
1. Electronic means by uploading to the CHAOS BBS or on disk (which will be returned to you). Note: we do not have the facilities as yet to handle the ST 3 1/2" format. These submissions at present will have to be by either modem or hardcopy.
2. Hardcopy submissions may be submitted, but they will require re-keying here in order to meet layout criteria as we use proportional print with a 47 character width. If at all possible, please use electronic submission.

Please include your name and telephone number with you submission so that we may contact you should there be a question. Your telephone number will not be published unless you request that it is for correspondence purposes.

Articles for submission (except for Club Pages) must arrive or be uploaded on or before the 20th. of each month. This is necessary, so that we can combine all of the materials, print the newsletter and hopefully, get it to you before your next club meeting. We would greatly appreciate your consideration of the above. Thank you.

Atari News

** BCAUG TO JOIN MMAM

Beginning with the December issue, BATTLE CREEK ATARI USERS GROUP (BCAUG) will be in MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. That's five groups in the last five months. Next major targets: KALAMAZOO, GRAND RAPIDS, ALPENA. Look for more of the finest Michigan ATARI groups as MMAM continues to expand into 1987.

** ATARIFEST PLANNED FOR DETROIT

They have been happening all over the country, and some have gotten attendance of over 2,000! Detroit based M.A.C.E. will be the central host for an ATARIFEST to be held sometime in mid 1987. Other nearby clubs will soon be contacted for support and publicity as the planning gets underway. Watch this magazine for details.

** NEW EXPRESS! VERSIONS

Keith Ledbetter, author of the very powerful and popular EXPRESS! series of terminal programs, announced that a new version for the 1030 and XM310 modem will soon be ready for distribution. Keith's 850 EXPRESS! v.3.0 has been out less than 2 months and is clearly the state of the art in terminal technology. It features a type-ahead window option (ideal for "CB" and similar conferences), Compuserve-compatible file protocols, internal wordwrap, and more. Look for some of these (and other?) features to appear on the upcoming 1030/XM301 release. If Keith SOLD these programs instead of making them public domain, they would outrank PRINTSHOP for the most used and best liked commercial software.

** OSS BRINGS OUT BAREWARE

Optimized Systems Software, Inc. is announcing a new line of software for Atari 8 and 16 bit computers. "BareWare" will be inexpensive ($25 and under), and many programs will include source code. Because of its price, BareWare will only be supported by mail and all documentation will be included on the disk. BareWare products will not be copy-protected. OSS's first two products will be QuikStart and ShortCut, both for the Atari 520ST and 1040ST. Each will cost $20.00.

QuikStart is a batch processor and ram disk combination that includes the ability to display prompts, create folders, copy, print, and delete files, set time and date, and run programs, to name just a few. When used with the accompanying ram disk OverDrive, QuikStart allows you to load the ram disk and its contents without ever touching the keyboard or mouse.

OSS's other entry on the BareWare label is ShortCut. This desk accessory will allow you to print, copy, and delete files and more without ever leaving your GEM application. This program was actually developed internally at OSS to help in the development of Personal Pascal. Full source code (in Personal Pascal) for ShortCut is included on each and every ShortCut disk allowing you to modify and enhance this program at your convenience.

A catalog of BareWare products will be available shortly, both in print and on most networks. OSS is actively seeking software for the Atari 8 bit and 16 bit computer line. Interested authors should send a SASE for a submissions kit.

Optimized Systems Software, Inc.1221 B Kentwood AvenueSan Jose, Ca. 95129(408) 446-3099

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA YEARS

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud. (ATASCII/ASCII)

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-3590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

PRESIDENT'S CORNER
By Leo Sell

I hope you all enjoyed the Auction last month. There were a lot, and I mean a lot, of bargains to be had. If you missed it... Oh well.

I want to thank everyone for all of their help at the Computer Show. Special thanks to the Bakers and to Gary Ferris, Mark Smathers, Mike Clewley and Mitch Wells.

The show itself was pretty successful for us I believe. Once again, we put forward the best presence of any computer club around. We got good exposure for the 8-bits and the ST's as well as for C.H.A.O.S.. Thanks again for your help and support.

I now have the pleasure of announcing two new appointments within the club. Mark Smathers has agreed to take over the ST library. Thank you Mark. And John Johnson is now the 16-bit representative on the C.H.A.O.S. Board of Directors. Thanks to you to John.

Things are going well for C.H.A.O.S. Our treasury is doing well, the library is expanding and the magazine is doing better than ever. That all also means that there are lots of ways for you to get involved. I hope you'll join in somewhere. We can use the help.

Speaking of help, we still need someone to volunteer to represent us on any Show commitee that the Michigan Computer Consortium puts together. Call me right away and volunteer.

Lastly, I hope that you are supporting our advertisers. In order to have a quality magazine like this, we need advertising revenue. And the advertisers have a habit of looking at results!! So stop in and buy and chat and let them know you're there.

don't miss the CHAOS meetings

C.H.A.O.S. OCTOBER 8-BIT MINUTES
By: Gary Ferris

Enthusiasm for computers continues to pick up this fall as attendance for the October meeting exploded to over 75 people.

The main event was the CHAOS Annual Auction which saw a large amount of merchandise finding new homes among the members.

Prior to the auction, there was some discussion about the impending release of the Mac cartridges and how ST owners would need to obtain the Macintosh OS roms from Apple dealers because the roms will not be included.

Also the confusion generated by stories of Compuserve copyrighting public domain software in their data libraries was generally cleared up and most of the horror stories appear to have been blown out of proportion.

The computer show scheduled for Sunday Oct. 19 and some of the controversy generated by an article in the State Journal was discussed as were the replies from Leo and John. (The show appeared to be quite a success)

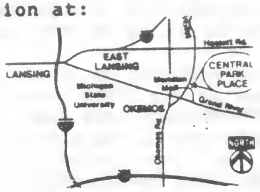
The treasury is in the process of changing from Old Kent bank to Capitol Federal Savings. The reasons for the change are twofold. Old Kent has only one branch across from the Capitol. Capitol Federal has branches all over the Lansing Metro area. This will enable more prompt deposits of funds and easier access for checking records. The second change is that the CFS account will be an interest bearing account which will allow unused funds to grow until needed.

The treasury currently shows:

Capitol Federal Savings	$ 808.00
Old Kent Bank	$ 320.56
Total	$ 1,128.56

CENTRAL PARK COMPUTERS

It's official -- We are in our new location at:



CENTRAL PARK PLACE
5100 MARSH ROAD, OKEMOS, MI., 48864
(517) 349-7353

5100 Marsh Road, Okemos
Just north of Chi Chi's
349-7353
Mon. thru Sat. 10am to 9pm
Sunday 12pm to 5pm

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
By: John Baker

If you weren't there, you missed it. If you were, it was well worth the trip. What am am rambling about?? The computer show at the Clarion of course!! Exceptional bargains to be had at most every table.

And when you speak of bargains, your first thought of course, is the C.H.A.O.S. table. Fair feature disk for only a buck, free posters, T-shirts free with a $5.00 purchase, and much more.

Our tables were in the far back corner, but thousands of loyal Atari fans found us soon after the doors were open, and it was non-stop action for the rest of the day. From the crowds at our tables, its obvious that Atari still is a force to be dealt with.

I want to take a moment to thank the many people who donated their time, software, and equipment for club use. Without the help of these people our club presentation could never have been the huge success that it was. Enthusiastic support by our club members is what is making our Atari users group one of the best around.

Now to library info. New items continually are being added to our library and a new listing is in the works. I would like to encourage any of you that have a large (or small) amount of public domain software to share it with our library. This will enable us to provide an even larger selection to our members. I would be more than happy to work out a trade with you, just contact me.

Bonus disks were passed out at the last meeting to subscribers of the Disk of the Month. Still never too late to get your subscription and take advantage of a monthly disk with some of the best software available for the 8-bit machines. Only $50.00 for a yearly subscription of 14 disks (12 + 2 bonus).

You like AMS music? We now have 12 different disks, with more being created. Koala Pics more your speed? There are now 10 disks of those to get you started, along with associated utilities to convert different formats, display, print, or modify .PIC files. AMIS BBS programs for 300/1200 baud modems, FOREM BBS, "C" and FORTH programming languages. How about 850 EXPRESS-Version 3.0. Get an 8K buffer with Spartados, multiple phone listings, numerous updates. It's all in your library. Check it out.

Utilities, Demos, Education, and of course Games. Take a GOOD look at your library listing. There is more there than perhaps you are aware of. We are working hard to make this one of the best public domain users group libraries. Take advantage of it. See you at the meeting.

Telecom

The CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

Not a lot is new at the CHAOS BBS this month, just LOTS of activity.

Right after the COMPUTER SHOW at the CLARION, we got a flood of dozens of new users, up from the "one a day" rate we have had going for a couple years now... I participated on a SYSTEM OPERATOR'S seminar that was the best attended regular seminar. Lots of people wanted to know why, how, and what running a BBS was all about. It was as much fun as last May when we did it the first time.

We did a couple of polls online at CHAOS to determine how many users had "BASIC XL/XE" or "ACTION!" language carts (both from OSS Inc.). If enough people had them, we would start including programs in those languages in our download area.

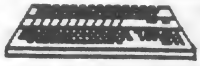
It turns out that about a third of our callers have BASIC XL or BASIC XE, with almost another 1/3 considering getting one or the other. That's more than enough involvement to start posting programs for this powerful version of BASIC (it is really FAR superior to ATARI BASIC!). Look for them to start popping up listed as "BXL/XE" in the files at CHAOS.

Not nearly as many users have or intend to get ACTION! despite its reputation as "THE" machine language system to use for the ATARI. Only about 15% of our users have it, and not even that many more intend to get it. Sorry, with so few of our users likely to ever be able to use any ACTION! programs, we don't expect to post too many on the board.

Unless we get a HARD DRIVE.... (Leo?)

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

Call the C.H.A.O.S. BBS
517-371-1106 24 Hours
NOW-300/1200 BAUD

ST 

OCTOBER ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of chaos MEETS THE SECOND sATURDAY of each month. After a very small meeting in September, the October meeting had 22 people attend, although not all own ST's. This led to an odd situation: With a dozen people, it's not too hard to get them to cluster around informally. With a larger group, there was a tendency for people form an "audience", and look for a "speaker". Later in the meeting, most everyone did leave their seats and mingle.

During the meeting, I demonstrated MEAN 18, a golf game that I enjoy. Alan Lane demonstrated PrintMaster, and discussed its pros and cons compared to PrintShop on the 8-bit machines. Mark Smathers showed Silent Service, which is a submarine simulation/game.

Along with the demonstations, the usual discussion ran along 2 topics: Problems with software or hardware, and problems with sellers of software and hardware. In the software area, someone had a problem with a ramdisk and BASIC running out of memory. It turned out that besides the ramdisk, a whole lot of desk accessories were also resident. So you can't put 200K of ramdisk, 200K of desk accessories, and 220K of BASIC into 512K. The answer here is to choose your desk accessories carefully, and match them to the application you plan to run.

Another ST owner had a problem with VIP Professional, that it would not print multiple pages correctly from page to page. While no one could pin down an exact solution, there was a wide range of suggestions of items to check. Most packages have a variety of parameters that interact when making output. The printer's switch setting must also match (i.e. skip over perf or not). With top margin, bottom margin, header, footer, lines per inch, lines per page, useable lines per page, just to name a few, there are a lot of items to check. My rule of thumb is that when I find a set of parameters that works for a document, I record that set as my test case. Then I always have a known test to go back to if I change printers or try something new.

As business at the meeting, the ST group got a couple of officers: Mark Smathers is the (temporary) librarian, and John Johnson is the CHAOS ST representative. Also discussed was participation in the Lansing October computer show (which is covered elsewhere in this magazine).

Other discussion covered things that had been purchased recently, and which vendors responded well. A friend of an ST owner had cancelled an ST order, because the vendor could not deliver, and bought a Macintosh instead! I'm uncertain in this column how much hearsay I want to pass on about companies easy to buy from and companies that cause problems. Right now, my attitude is to emphasize positive items, not pass on gossip, and not publish names of companies that give bad response. Should I change this? If we wanted to do a report on vendors, we would have to be very rigorous and fair in recording every experience. Let me know your opinion at the next meeting.

Most of the ST owners like the hard cased 3 1/2 inch floppies that the ST uses. If you want to look inside one, hold it on edge, take a small screwdriver, and split the case open. You might have to wrench the metal shutter off also.

Oops, don't do this to a disk that has any data on it. I forgot to say that it's a one-way operation. Or, if you want to see the inside without sacrificing a disk, come to the next ST meeting and we'll pass one around.

In conclusion, I'll pass on a helpful hint that I learned at the meeting. This hint comes from Mark Smathers. It could be called "know your desktop". At the end of the meeting, Mark spent about an hour showing the library, and showing how desktops can be used to advantage.

Simply stated, figure out the routine things you do when you boot your ST, and make the desktop do them automatically. If you always have a ramdisk D, then open A, then change the directory from icons to text, then open First Word, you can simplify this. Open A and put the window where you want it, sized as you prefer. Change to text mode, and the sort that you like. Save your desktop and it will always come up like this! If you want to go further, put First Word in an AUTO folder so it will automatically execute.

ST-and by for future ST-utterings next month.

OTHER LANSING AREA COMPUTER CLUBS

CLUB	COMPUTER	CONTACT	PHONE #
Apple LUG	Apple	Gary Martin	394-0115
CCUG	Color Comp	Dale Knepper	626-6917
CMARC	Ama.Radio	Bill Hineman	323-2914
COMP KLUB	Texas Ins.	John Hayes	882-7860
DECUS	DEC	C.M. Watson	487-1111
DRUG	DEC Rainbow	Jeff Weihl	349-6967
Epson Users	Epson	Ted Bozarth	332-3710
LACC	Commodore	Jae Walker	351-7061
LAMALUG	Mac/Lisa	Chas Winters	787-5731
MIG	All	Warren Wolfe	337-7672
UPCO	IBM/Comp.	Skip Osterhus	321-3425

VIEWPOINT

SHOW vs SHOW vs SHOW
by Leo Sell

Well, October 19 made the third Computer (or related) show I have attended locally in the last 9 months. This article includes my descriptions and impressions of the Spring Computer Show sponsered by the Michigan Computer Consortium, the Lansing area Ham Fest (touted as a great place for computer related bargains) and the Fall Computer Show, sponsered by Michigan Computer Shows.

There were a lot of similarities between the actual Computer Shows. Not surprising, considering that the substantially the same people organized both shows.

The real contrast was the Ham Fest. It is always highly touted by writers in both Energy and the Lansing State Journal, as an excellent place to pick up computer hardware/software bargains.

Spring Computer Show

For the most part, the Spring show was quite successful. However, various aspects made it a mixed bag to me. It was successful in that the show made a lot of money for the Consortium and the sponsoring Clubs. It also laid a precedent of high professionalism in location, setting, style and organization. One can only hope that such professionalism will be continued if other individuals put such shows together in the future.

However, I think the success was limited in that the merchants did not do as well as they could have (but well enough to bring them back). I also feel the success was muted by the fact that the organizational work was done primarily by 4 or 5 individuals. The work load was not shared as much as it should have been. In fact, I think that some individuals came very close to burning out.

Ham Fest

This was my first experience with the Ham Fest that takes place yearly at the South Washington Armory. For the last couple of years, writers in both Energy and the Lansing State Journal have highly recommended the show as THE place to pick up computer bargains.

How did I find it? In short I thought it was overpriced ($3.00 at the door) and under-bargained! (This of course, is from a Computerist's point of view. If you were a HAM enthusiast, there was plenty of value for your $3.00).

Compared to the facilities at the Clarion, the Armory was a real sorry place. Facility aside, I thought the setup and presentation of the Fest was amateurish to a fault. It looked completely non-professional and unpolished. Now that's not all bad, but comparing things like the facilities, admission price and overall presentation, it was a real contrast to the Spring and Fall Computer shows. The Ham Fest is obviously done on a shoestring.

The bargains were difficult to sort out and find, but something else was not...BLATANT SOFTWARE PIRACY!!! For the first time in my experience, I saw Copyrighted software being openly copied and SOLD over the counter. There were lists of "protected" and copyrighted software to choose from. Some was even posted as "broken". All at prices around $5 or $6.00. Thankfully, it was all Commodore software. It was eyeopening. It also made me wonder where we Atarians get our reputation, with that kind of blatant cheating and stealing going on by owners of other computers.

Fall Computer Show

This was the first Commercial Computer Show to come to Lansing. Again, in many ways it was highly successful. To me it was especially successful in that the high degree of professionalism established last Spring was continued in every way.

The show was also successful in that there were a lot of great bargains to be had, so attendees were happy. There was also a lot of sales, so the merchants were happy.

On the down side, there were some serious mistakes made by the organizers and those mistakes were capitalized on by a few stubborn and prideful individuals who refused to compromise or bury the hatchet. As a result of their actions and lobbying, the Consortium and the area Clubs had far less involvement and profit opportunity than they could have. What could have been the best of both worlds, a combination of professional management and strong local Computer community support, was pushed aside in order to assuage hurt pride.

Nonetheless, I feel that the Fall Show was a great success, for the merchants, for the organizers and for CHAOS. I really appreciate the fact that the organizers of both Computer shows chose to do the shows in a professional manner and setting. Had the Spring Show been anything like the Ham Fest, there certainly would not have been any repeats of the show.

COMPUTERS AND OFFICE SUPPLIES

SUN DRAFT FLINT

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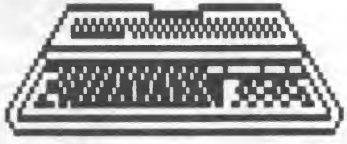
Flint, MI 48504
732-2885

WE HAVE INCREASED THE AMOUNT OF SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE FOR THE ATARI ALONG THE LINES THAT MANY OF YOU HAVE SUGGESTED. WE CAN NOW UPGRADE THE 520ST WITH TOS INTO ROM. BE SURE TO SEE OUR LASER 128.



GENESEE ATARI GROUP

serving the Flint area

VIEWPOINT

Presidential Mumblings for November
by Jim Steele G.A.G.

Well, here we go again with more deathless prose from the G.A.G. editorial pit. This month's report centers on the officer's election at the October meeting.

To make a short story even shorter, there was no election. At least not in the usual sense. The motion was brought from the floor (pretty dirty it was, too!) to keep the present bunch in power for another term, assuming they were willing. The current crew was willing, and probably flattered, so the motion was carried unanimously. (When the Heck did WE start this Robert's rules stuff?)

It was also decided to make the Print Librarian's position a seperate post. Nick Klak graciously agreed to shoulder this burden. See him to check out any of our books and magazines. We've also got an Atari 1030 modem in there that you can check out for a month. This is a great way to get a feel for telecommunications if you're just testing the water. No need to spring for a modem if you don't like going on-line. That's about it for the October minutes, now on to November.

Just another reminder, November is Swap Meet month. Bring out that old junk and swap it for someone else's old junk. Cash will also work. As always we require that software sold be ORIGINAL copies only.

This month marks the beginning of GAG's third year. I think we've accomplished a great deal, but we need to know what you all want from the group. Those of us who've been around Atari for a while sometimes take too much for granted. Don't be afraid to speak up, it's your group too.

till next time, -Jim

Disk Library

Welcome to Create-an-excuse
by Jerry Cross

Due to the storms that rolled through Michigan last month, and the overtime I had to work, and also to a lack of programs being uploaded to my usual source, this month's offerings are a bit skimpy.

But there are a few new disks for you to check out. I finally put together a collection of Nicole Hobbs' Koala pictures (before I could lose them again). Nicole is the granddaughter of GAG member Faye Hanners. Many of these pictures were drawn when Nicole was 12 years old. This is a welcome addition to our Koala collection , and maybe more will follow.

There is also another collection of AMS music files, and a PARROT digitized sound demo. You do not need the PARROT hardware to run these files.

There are also a couple of updates to past GAG disks. If you own TEXTPRO, I have a much more comprehensive set of documentation files. These files take up almost a full side of one disk, and must be put out seperately. If you would like a copy, bring 50 cents (to cover the cost of the disk). Future TEXTPRO sales will include both disks untill I can figure out a way to put everything on a single disk.

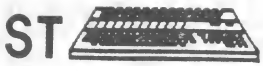
Another update is the EXPRESS 850 ver 3.0. This version now supports Compuserve's Vidtex protocal, CRC x-modem downloading, and has an on-screen text window. This is handy if you use the "CB" features on the network services like Compuserve or Genie. Bring your old disk to swap.

Don't miss the December meeting. I spend the rest of the petty cash fund on some neat door prizes. Atari was cleaning out their warehouse and came across a bunch of old stock that are now collectors items. I have a box full of hats, t-shirts, coffee mugs, beersteins, and more.

Finally, if you have been trying to call my bbs (FACTS), I had to take it down for a while.

The hard drive needed repair, and it wasn't worth the trouble to run the bbs on just RAM power. As of Oct 20 I still have no word on when it will be repaired, but with luck it may be back on-line in November. When it does, watch out! I got to catch up on these other bbs's in town.

That's it for this month. See you all at the meeting.



ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

The GAG ST disk library continues to grow by leaps and bounds. For November there will be 4 new disks available, #23-26. The quality and usefulness of the public domain software seems to be increasing and this month's selections provide good examples.

Those who attended October's general meeting know that I purchased a monochrome monitor. I have put together a disk with two entertainment programs that will only function with the monochrome mode. From Germany comes a delightful puzzle game in which you must assemble a series of around 25 puzzles. Starting out with a close-up view of an eye, use the mouse to fit all the pieces into their proper places. It's a large program that makes good use of the amazing amount of detail possible in the 640 by 400 pixel mode. Particularly amusing is the changing mouse cursor which is in the form of a face. It will change its expression depending on what you're doing.

There is also a pool program on this disk which is easy to play and uses the mouse for aiming a shooting. As an added bonus I have included a text file by Jack Durre that provides complete instructions for increasing the effective screen size of the SM124 monochrome monitor. For some inexplicable reason the factory adjustment of this monitor leaves a huge horizontal border robbing about two inches of potential screen size. The adjustment to the monitor to fill the screen is not difficult if you are not afraid to open the monitor and work near high voltages. This 15 minute procedure will be well worth the effort. If you own a monochrome monitor, you need this disk. As promised last month I have finally located the latest version of ST Writer version 1.50. It is included on a disk together with an arced version of ST Writer 1.07. Version 1.50 has fixed just about all the remaining bugs in this solid word processor as well as added several new features. Outdenting is now possible as well as enhancements to the header and footer feature. The documentation has been rewritten and is clearer than ever. An additional text file has been added so that you can check your printer configuration file to ensure that all of the special printing features are working correctly on your particular printer. I have also included a short 33K print spooler program which greatly eliminates the waiting time while smaller documents are being printed.

ST Writer was originally written by John Feagans of Atari and is similar in most respects to the 8 bit AtariWriter. Although not GEM based it contains more raw power than First Word and is relatively simple to learn. Don't miss this disk.

A general purpose disk contains the programs and documentation for ARC.TTP and utilities. This version of ARC is compatible with both the Amiga and IBM versions. Arcing is the process of compiling and compressing a single or series of files into one easy to manage file. It is perfect for telecommunications as it saves both uploading and downloading time. It is also desirable for maintaining backups of your software collection as it generally reduces disk space by at least 50%. These archived files can be manipulated in a variety of ways and can always be extracted and decompressed for everyday use. Also included is a GEM shell program that allows you to easily pass parameters through the use of the mouse and dialog boxes. Also contained on this general disk are the files that comprise the latest Xanth demo, BALLIT.PRG. This is an impressive graphics display of a ball bouncing on a glass mirror. Impress your friends! There is also a game/demo type program, Nightcrawler that people tell me is similar to Electronic Arts "Worms" that was released for the 8 bits a couple of years ago. This program uses the GEM interface and can have a very hypnotic effect on you as you control from 1 to 4 worms on their colorful adventure. Documentation for this program is included.

Another full disk of Tiny pictures will also be available for your viewing pleasure. Many of these pictures were award winners in the recent ANTIC magazine competition. Some of the pictures on this disk were converted from the Amiga and Macintosh as well as being original ST masterpieces. I will try to have a new disk of pictures available every month.

Don't forget that the November meeting is our semi-annual swap meet. If you have any commercial ST hardware or software that you would like to trade or sell, bring it with you. If you're in the market for software bring your wallet.

GAG ST Library Disks are available to members only at $4 per disk. All submissions to the library are both welcomed and encouraged. User groups desiring swaps should contact:

Gil Merciez
5302 Lethbridge
Grand Blanc, Mi., 48439

Next Meetings:
November 12 '86: 6:30 pm (swap meet)
November 22 '86: 9:30 am (Saturday session)
December 10 '86: 6:30 pm (Merry Christmas!)
January 14 '87: 6:30 pm (Can't plan this far ahead!)
January 24 '87: 9:30 am (Saturday session)

The G.A.G. Crew:

Jim Steele	President
Gil Merciez	VP(16) and ST Librarian
Matt Howe	VP(8)
Jerry Cross	8 bit disk Librarian
Jim Tuma	8 bit disk Librarian
Nick Klak	Print Librarian

Mailing address:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, 2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint, MI. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. We also have a Saturday morning session for the second-shifters. This group meets at 9:30 am on the fourth Saturday of the month (During the school year only). Come on out and say G'day!

G.A.G. Membership dues are $10 per year. This entitles you to our newsletter, currently included in this publication, and access to our software and print libraries. If joining by mail, checks should be written to Jim Steele.
<Thank you for your support>

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CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Wolfgang Mueller	789-8917
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Secretary	Rick Sullivan	783-6652
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

FROM THE PRES

by Wolfgang Mueller

The main topic of discussion in this months newsletter should be that the meeting day has been changed, with the consent to the membership, the meetings will be held on the second sunday of each month.

With the upcoming elections this could very well be my last article as the CACE President. I hope everyone will attend the next meeting to vote for their favorite officers.

After our elections, we will be having some software demonstrations. Our current Vice President, Bob Kingsbury, would like to demonstrate a few programs for the membership, namely; Heartware, Partyware, and Cardware.

Anyone wishing to demo original software, please feel free to contact myself, or any officer, prior to the meeting.

I would like to mention the computer fair we plan on having in February. To date I show a need for twelve complete computer systems to be demonstrating hardware and software. I'm sure this subject will be discussed, and volunteers solicited.

Thank You and see you at the meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT
by Scott Boland

Well, another month has rolled around and it's time for me to write another treasury report. As of October 18 the treasury contained $263.04 in the bank account and $27.00 in petty cash.

By the time you read this newsletter you will have already been informed of the change in the club meeting date. All the officers felt that in order to receive the newsletter before the meeting, we had to move the date to the 2nd Sunday of the month. I hope this doesn't cause to many problems, but it was necessary.

I would like to welcome Robert Trowbridge to the club. He joined at the September meeting. I am in the process of firming up a February date with Westwood Mall for our computer faire. If anyone has suggestions or would like to volunteer to help out by donating time or equipment, please contact any of the officers. All volunteers will be greatly appreciated.

Just a reminder to all club members. The first of the club dues expire in November. Please check the expiration date of your dues. You can find your expiration date on the mailing label of your copy of the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. Dues may be paid by cash or by check made out to Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts. Thank you.

Disk Library

LIBRARY

by Bob Kingsbury

As the new club librarian I have made some additions to the club library. Since most of you have seen it last the library has grown. I have gone thru my personal collection and have added 20 more double sided full disks. I still have more to add and will as time will allow. Most of these programs are from BBS systems from all over the U.S.A. that I call from time to time. I hope you find them useful and or fun to use. If you have any new programs that you would like to share with the club please bring them to the next meeting. At the meeting I will have an updated list to look thru. While there check out the 3 double sided disk picture files or the 2 disks of Printshop Icons.

Come early so we can get started on copying your disk needs.

Answers to the C.A.C.E. puzzler.

COMPUTER, DISK, PROGRAMS, SOFTWARE, WORD PROCESSOR, BASIC, KEYBOARD, MODEM, INTERFACE, SCROLLING

HELP START Just Starting

In lieu of the lack of articles submitted by the membership, I intend to submit a short puzzler for your enjoyment each month. Hopefully, they will be in different forms, and of varying difficulties.

We will always be more than happy to print any articles, or brainwork, you wish to submit.

The puzzler for this month is a word scramble.

Have Fun,
Millie

TREOPUCM

KISD

SROMPARG

TRAFSWOE

DROW ROSCPORES

ISCAB

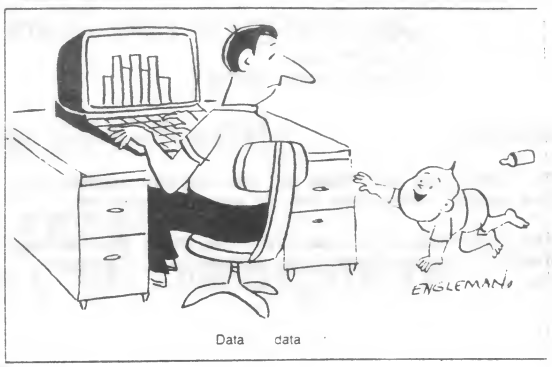
REABKOY

EMMOD

FRAITCEEN

CRIOLNGLS

Answer elsewhere on this page.



TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

TRI-CITY ATARI USERS GROUP MEETINGS

The TRI-CITY ATARI USERS GROUP (TAG) meets the second saturday of every month at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw Michigan. Meeting time is 2:00 pm. This month's meeting will be on November 8th.

*** MICHTRON DEMO'S SOFTWARE AT TAG!! ***

This month's meeting features Michtron, an ST software developer out of Pontiac Michigan! Michtron has been the most prolific in terms of numbers, while their quality has certainly not been lacking. Michtron will be demoing both monochrome and color programs and will have packages for sale. ALL members from ALL clubs are welcome!!

*** DIRECTIONS TO THE MEETING ***

If you're going SOUTH on I-75: Get off at the I-675 exit, then get off I-675 at the Tittabawassee Rd. exit and go West 3 miles, turn South at Center Rd. and go 2 miles. This puts you at the intersection of Center and Shattuck. You're here! You can see a Fire Station, a Police Station and the Library.

If you're going NORTH on I-75: Get off at the I-675 exit, then get off at the Davenport (also called 58) exit and go 3 miles West, turn North at Center Rd. (there's a McDonalds at the corner) and go 1 mile. This puts you at the right intersection (see above). Let's have a big turn out for Michtron!!!

OFFICERS

President.....LeRoy Valley (517) 686-6796
Sec/Treasurer.Marty Schmidt(517) 792-6029
Editor.....Char Davis (517) 686-4170
Disk Librarian.Al Jennings (517) 790-1980

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT
by LeRoy Valley

Well, it seems like we've made it big time! From a mere 3-4 page newsletter to a magazine which covers all of Michigan. Now members have access to a variety of user group info and a considerable increase in reading material. Not only do I feel that we have much to gain from being a part of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, but I feel that we have much to offer.

Our club supports the 8-bits as well as the ST's, and we have demos for both machines at every meeting. We have a Public Domain Library for both machines and are more than willing to trade disks with other clubs. If you're interested, contact our Disk Librarian. Monthly columns include ST Notes, Piece's Of Eight, and The Disk Doctor.

At our last meeting I announced that due to an increase in my work schedule I would be forced to drop the Piece's Of Eight column. I heard quite a bit of grumbling about 'no support for the 8-bits' and other comments in the same vein. The fact is that I write most of the newsletter now, including ST Notes and Piece's Of Eight! If you're worried about support for the 8-bit, please write a column. I'll be more than happy to print it. I don't own an 8-bit, so it's quite a bit of work for me to come up with material for the column. If you have an interesting piece of software or hardware, tell us about it in writing. I'm also willing to edit it for you. The only requirement is that you do the article on a word processor, so that I don't have to retype it. This is a CLUB and we need input if we are to survive.

MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

FREE ! FREE ! FREE ! The October meeting featured demo's of some of our Public Domain software and an opportunity to get a copy of it. Many people took advantage of this offer, and both 5 1/4" and 3 1/2" were kept very busy.

The meeting opened with the 8-bit demo's and Al Jennings had quite a few of them. The PD software demoed was excellent software. One of the programs demoed was Dash, a Boulderdash type construction set game. It is written in basic and requires an entire disk. Dash plays much like Boulderdash and you can save your creations to a disk. The next demo was the Amis music program and a graphics program called the Icon Shop. This is a program that uses MacPaint style icons to create print shop icons. With this program you can use either a joystick, koalapad or a mouse. Also on the disk are several utilities for use on the Icon Shop and a scrunched file (a "scrunched file" is a file that has been compressed to use less disk space. The file must be uncompressed before it can be used) of print shop icons with an unscruncher program.

ST programs demoed included Megaroids, PicSwitch, FDI, and Disktop. Lance Middleton demoed Megaroids, a clone of the arcade classic Asteroids. The graphics are very well done and game play gets very fast as the game progresses. This program was written in MegaMax C, and the source code is available. (Anybody know of a joystick version of this game? Using the keyboard is a pain!).

Dan Barrowman followed with a demo of PicSwitch, a graphics utility that allows you to convert pictures between any resolution on the ST (low to high, low to medium, high to medium, etc.). In addition the program also converts Neochrome to Degas and vice versa, AND will convert any Amiga or MacIntosh picture to NeoChrome or Degas. This is one program well worth having!

The final demo was of two disk indexing programs, FDI (Floppy Disk Indexer) and Disktop. These two programs represent opposite ends of the spectrum, but both do a decent job of cataloging your disks. Disktop is a GEM based program that stores a minimal amount of data about your disks. The only data stored is disk name and file names. You can search for an individual file, or a disk, and search time is quick. FDI, on the other hand, is TOS based and stores the disk name, file names, a three line description of each file, creation date, and the file size. It can search on multiple fields, and individual files can be deleted or added. The time required to index a disk is substantial and the program runs slowly, but on a hard drive these problems are nonexistent.

The meeting ended with a general copy session and many people picked up some good software. It's funny how you don't want any of the PD software until you actually see it running!

E B V

Equipment Brigade Volunteers for the month of November are as follows:

Dan Barrowman.....ST keyboard
Frank Serresseque...Two SF314 disk drives
Lance Middleton.....Color Monitor
Paul Bork.....Monochrome Monitor

A big THANK YOU to all who donate equipment for the club to use!!

Disk Library

THE DISK DOCTOR
by Al Jennings

Since this is TAG's first newsletter with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, I guess I'll start by telling something about myself & our library. About 4 years ago I bought an Atari 2600. I had it 1 day before I took it back to the store and picked up an Atari 400 with cassette. That lasted about a year until I got an 800XL & a disk drive.

When T.A.G. was first started I was one of the charter members. I became Disk Librarian last June when I was voted into office. Since June I have more than doubled our library. I have worked hard at downloading various programs from bulletin boards and trading with other clubs. If any other clubs would like to talk about swapping disks, my phone number is 517-790-1980. I have added two more print shop icons disks to the library which makes a total of 6 so far. I am trying to find more as they prove to be very popular with the club members. For the future I'm trying to make up a better catalog of our programs, but with the work to be done as librarian this is proving to be slow going. I am also getting together a special disk of Christmas music and Christmas programs which will be nice for the coming holidays.

ST

ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley

Since this is my first column for the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, let me introduce myself. I'm LeRoy Valley (I know, it's printed just above here!) and I'm the president of TAG. I've been through a 400, 800, 800XL, 130XE, and finally I've got an ST. I generally try to review software and hardware in this column, and also try to uncover any savory (or unsavory) rumours concerning the ST. Now that that's out

of the way, let's get down to some meaty subjects and start off with some general information and rumours:

CASIO CZ-101 Problems? I just got a Casio CZ-101 to play with and I seemed to be having problems with it. If the unit was turned on before turning on my ST, my ST would lock up during boot up. Also, when recording, my keyboard would lock up for no apparent reason. Assuming that the ST was not working properly, I tried the CZ-101 on another ST and got the same results. After talking to Casio, I learned that early CZ-101's had a bad set of ROM's that caused all sorts of unpredictable problems when the synthesizer was used with MIDI equipment. These ROM's will be replaced free of charge by Casio, regardless of whether or not the unit is under warranty. Just give Casio a call and ask for Jerry Kavorski.

Just buy STARGLIDER and it won't run? It's probably not a bad disk, it's your computer. Starglider appears to be an excellent game, but I can't really tell because the game doesn't run on my machine. It runs on 4 other ST's that I tried, but bombs out every time I try it. Firebird software told me that this program uses every chip in the ST extensively and internal timing is critical. If your ST is slightly out of spec, the program might not run. Appears to me that this program is the ultimate diagnostic tool. So off to the repair shop with my ST...

BLITTER CHIPS are finished and ready for shipping! You should be able to obtain them in about a month. Atari is saying that the blitter chip option must be dealer installed, as the chip is piggy-backed on the MC-68000. With the price of the blitter chip targeted around $80 the final cost will probably be about $125-$150 after installation. The blitter chip does not give you extra colors, more bit planes, etc. The only advantage is speed (about 16 times that of the current ST). Current software will not run faster on the blitter chip, UNLESS it was specifically written to take advantage of the blitter chip. Along with the blitter chip you get a new set of TOS chips that have been debugged and now support booting off of a hard drive (HOORAY!!).

Enough in the rumours department, lets get down to this month's review. I just purchased Megafont ST and it is great! I owned the 8-bit version way back when and when I saw it available for the ST, I just had to have it. Many improvements have been made to the original 8-bit version - the addition of GEM support, the ability to handle DEGAS fonts, a built in font editor, a graphics dump program, and the ability to handle Typesetter icons. The program is not copy protected and I am currently running it onmy hard drive.

The main feature of the program is to dump text files out to your printer in customized fonts. Included are 20 8x8 fonts and 16 8x16 (DEGAS) fonts. Some samples of the fonts are Archaic, Computer, Cursive, Olde English, and Zebra. Megafont ST supports the following printers: SMM804, NEC, Prowriter, Epson and compatibles. I used the program with a Panasonic KXP-1091 and it worked very well.

Megafont ST is supposed to be compatible with 1st Word files, but when I tried to dump a 1st Word file, all of the control codes were printed out along with the document. After contacting XLent Software, I sent in my version 1.00 disk for an update. They said that they were aware of the problem and that it was already fixed. Using 1st word, you can print multiple font styles through Megafont ST. (Example, you can use Archaic and print one word in Olde English in middle of a sentence) This feature is superb and works as advertised.

When the program is fired up, you have a selection of items presented to you at the top of the screen: Font Type, File Type, Print Mode, Options, Print Text, and Graphics. Pointing to Font Type drops down a menu where you select 8x8 or 8x16 font and specify the exact font to be used. File Type gives you a selection of As Is, ASCII (As Is), ASCII (Strip), 1st Word, and Wordstar. As Is prints the file exactly as saved including control characters. ASCII (AS IS) prints all characters with ASCII values ranging from 0 to 255, while (STRIP) prints ASCII values from 0 to 127. If the ASCII value is greater than 127, then the eight bit is stripped off. In this mode, you can use multiple fonts in your file. 1st Word, obviously, prints out a 1st word file, while Wordstar allows you to print out Wordstar files created on your MS-DOS system. Both of these options support multiple fonts.

Print Mode allows you to print the selected font in any of four sizes: small, medium, large, and extra large. The Options menu gives you the ability to set the left and right margins, line spacing (a solution for word processors that only support single line spacing!), enable bold face printing, and turn paging on or off.

The Graphics menu allows you to load up DEGAS files, Typesetter ST and Rubberstamp ST files. You can enable boldface printing and inverse printing (negative printing).

The Font Editor is complete and allows you to view the character as it is produced. You are presented with an 8x8 grid to generate the character in and at the bottom of the screen is a box containing all of the current characters available from the keyboard. You select a character such as A and whatever is generated will be printed every time the program sees an A.

Another nice touch is the ability to download a graphics character set to a printer. Printers currently supported for this function are the Epson FX-80, Panasonic 1092 (the 1091 will work if the internal buffer is expanded), modified Prowriter 8510AP & true compatibles. All in all, the program is excellently designed, and works as advertised. The program can be used with virtually any word processor, and allows you a great deal of flexibility. This one is a must for any ST owner!! Only $39.95 from XLent Software.

Well, that's it for this month! See you next month when I can give you a review of StarGlider. Also, about 2 months ago I published a review of the Supra 20MB hard drive which is rather complete. In it I compare the Supra to the Atari. If there's enough interest, I could rerun it in the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Just let me know!

TAG CLASSIFIEDS:

FOR SALE: 800XL - $50.00. Contact Dan Barrowman at (517)686-0664

** 1MB ST UPGRADE **
Want your ST upgraded to 1MB? I do them for $115.00, work guaranteed. I've already done 28 ST's and haven't lost one yet (cross my fingers). I run a full memory test for 6 hours. Contact LeRoy Valley at (517)686-6796. I will complete the upgrade in 1-2 days.

Review

JOYSTICK JOY!!
By Leo Sell

I have recently had the pleasure of kicking my children off the computer and trying out a new joystick - the Epyx 500XJ. What a great stick. The feel is very tactile and the response is extremely quick. Wanna hear more?

The 500XJ is small and light. It is made to fit your hand like a glove. Unfortunately two hands are almost certainly required and the design makes it difficult for lefties.

I played several games with this joystick. Games that have always frustrated me when my joystick would not respond. No such problem here. This thing is quick. So quick, I was often somewhere and firing before I really meant to be.

Epyx is standing behind the product with a 5 year, 10 million shot warranty on the 500XJ. They are obviously proud of the product. And with good reason.

I can firmly recommend the Epyx 500XJ joystick to all of you out there. It costs only slightly more than a pair of Atari joysticks (and they won't last 90 days).

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JL FEATURE OF THE MONTH JL

Industry Report

THE ICD STORY
By Tom Dean - Rockford Register Star
(Reprinted in ZMAGAZINE 9/86)

A small Rockford (Illinois) business is entering a highly competitive niche of the computer industry dominated by foreign manufacturers. But ICD Inc. says it can succeed in the market for personal-computer accessories.

In it's current market, selling Atari computer accessories, ICD's expansionary philosophy has carried it from a single product basement buisness to a 3,000 square foot site in the Reed-Chatwood building, 1300 Rock Street.

President Tom Harker has been his own boss since 1984,when he quit his job as a field engineer with Rockfords Professional Buisness Systems, a seller of word processors, to form ICD Inc. with Mike Gustafson, a young self trained computer technician.

ICD's first product, an enhancer for the Atari Disk Drive [the U.S. DOUBLER], was marketed and manufactured in Harkers basement.

ICD's catalog has a line of 11 accessories for Atari computers. The mailing list has grown to 6,000 customers, many of whom are distributors. The company also sells directly to individuals.

To keep up with it's growing product line and increasing orders, Harker said, the company in the next three months will add five employees to it's staff of six.

While Harker is concerned with the buisness aspects of the operation, the company's design office is reserved for Gustafson, a soft spoken 22 year old who seems to embrace the "sterotypical whiz kid" label Harker jokingly gives him.

Mike does the programming and hardware end of it,says Harker who calls Gustafson "one of the better programmers in the country."

I've always like working on computers, Gustafson said as he displayed his first computer - a Sym computer board kit that he modified into a full-blown computer while in the eighth grade.

The pair met when Harker began as a distributor of computer parts. Harker was interested in a disk- drive enhancer Gustafason was selling from his home in Minnesota.

The two went into buisness with $10,000 in cash and $20,000 in debt, says Harker.

"We were organizing and being poor" said Gustafson of their first year in buisness.

Even when the product began selling, Harker said the two didn't bring home a lot of money. They started making a profit "from day one", once they started shipping their product, he said.

But most of the revenue was channeled back into the buisness. When you're expanding, Harker said, it's hard to make money.

The two say they're still following that expansionary philosophy. It seems to have paid off. Their most recent product - an interface, or adapter, which allows Atari owners to plug in printers and modems made by other companies - has been ICD's biggest seller.

We can't build enough of them, Gustafson said. ICD displayed the interface at the CES in Chicago last month from a spot in Atari's booth, a perch Gustafson said they earned by establishing a good reputation.

Another marketing tatic they used to introduce the interface was a contest in their catalogs that challenge customers to guess what the new product would be.

Along with generating interest,the contest served as a market-research tool for the company:what customers guessed was often what the customer would like to see on the market, Harker said.

ICD is using the responses as a guide to developing other products. Harker and Gustafson also rely on instinct in product development. You have to know what's going on in the market, Harker said. "We're consumers ourselves - we know what we'd like to see!"

JL FEATURE OF THE MONTH JL

ICD CONFERENCE
From COMPUSERVE, edited by John Nagy

ICD Corp was the guest (and subject) of a COMPUSERVE conference in the ATARI 8-bit SIG on saturday, September 13. The session ran well over 2 hours with most of the conversation revolving around the MIO external RAM box (256K to a full MEG plus interfaces and hard drive adaptor!) and the new SPARTADOS cartridge. Here is a compilation of some of the more interesting points.

MIKE and TOM are the reps from ICD and the Chairman of the conference was KEITH LEDBETTER (the author of the EXPRESS! terminal programs). Comments and questions from other participants are not identified here. The order of the responses is not as in the original, and some of the quotes are condensed or filled in to make more sense.

> I've heard that you have plans to release SpartaDOS on a cart. Do you have plans to add new features to the cartridge version?

(ICD-Mike) The cart version of SD is still being written, and will contain many new features: It has a built in database. The command processor is much more complex. It will mimick commands as it performs them (self tutoring). The current version (3.2) has been in a cart for testing for some time now, however the final SD X (as it is called around here) should be released in about 3 mos and shall take about 32K -- 16K for database and 3.2 core and 16K for menu (also containing sophisticated batch file ability... You will have to pretty much see it for your self when it does come out since it will end up being quite a bit different. Not just a rewrite.

(Chmn Keith) ok..(hope you have a flag to turn that "tutoring" off..hehe).

> Is That SpartaDOS "random" access?

(ICD-Mike) SpartaDOS X (cart) handles files up to 16Meg with total random access, it takes a max of 1/10 sec to position to the middle of a file of that size... the sector map scheme has been modified so that a high level mapping scheme is running in parallel... thats why you have such high speeds (pos through 8Meg that fast)... the main reason for this is because the database (large databases) required much positioning/loading (binary fashion) to find a record and a linear position is much to slow... Also insert/delete sectors in the middle of a file is required for database. This is one reason it is taking quite some time in developement... there is major rewrite in many areas.

(Chmn Keith) Mike, going to put the current directory in the prompt? Like:
D1:DOWNLOAD> ?

(ICD-Mike) Very probable... this is fairly easy stuff and will be finalized in a month or so. The SDX will take about the same amount of memory as does 3.2.

(Chmn Keith) hmmm...same amount of memory even tho it is in a cartridge?

(ICD-Mike) The SDX still has to put much of its contents in RAM because the ROM can not be activated while running normal carts or programs in the cart area... however, the command proccessor will be ALL in ROM... this is one of the redeeming featues of this set up... the area the old command proc used to take up will be replaced with general expansion of the kernal (or FMS). It will be instant high speed (unlike disk versions) and the DOS is already loaded after just a breif delay for system initialization.

> Will the SDX cart be chainable like the RT8? I forsee a series of one-touch crashes with this stack of carts.

(ICD-Mike) You can stack the RT8, SD X, and then a cart on top, and SD X will be able to turn on or off the cart plugged into it. Our stacking carts are fairly sturdy, but you must take care.

(ICD-Mike) The cart will be $79.95 and will be availible in about 3 months (hopefully).

> I have a number of questions about MIO (as I am sure most of us do):
1) will the MIO rob me of my cart. slot on 130xe?...
2) will I get a Tech. Ref. Manual with MIO?
3) will MIO support Floppies?
4) can MIO support the Western Digital Controller?
5) is MIO RS232 850 compatable?

(ICD-Tom) 1 -- The 130XE requires a $19.95 adaptor which adds 2 slots to the bus.

(ICD-Mike) 2 -- Yes, all registers are documented (very complete)
3 -- Yes, just like normal (except you also get to redirect)
4 -- Yes, WDC 1002S-SHD or 1002-SHD or 1002-SAS

(ICD-Tom) The MIO will handle any Hard drive the SASI or SCSI controller will take... for example: you can divide a 40 Meg into 2 16 Megs (lets say D1: and D6:)..

(ICD-Mike) 5 -- Yes (also does not take up internal user memory)

> Is the Ramdisk Battery backed..I've heard both it is and isn't.

(ICD-Tom) The MIO uses a seperate power supply which is the same type as used with 1050 disk drives. There is not a battery back up provision.

> The MIO is still a volatile (RAM) item, unless you leave the power on?

(ICD-Mike) Yes, if your application must NOT risk a crash of the RAM, a Uninterruptable

Power Supply is the way to go. They are expensive, but battery backup is impractical since 1Meg RAM takes a lot of power (relative to CMOS 8K static RAMs)..

> Can the Ram in a 256k MIO be upgraded to say... 1 MEG?

(ICD-Tom) Sure, but it must be done by ICD. The MIO uses special DRAM ICs not normally avilable and no sockets. Price will be around $200 to upgrade.

> Will ICD sell a kit for MIO ram upgade?

(ICD-Tom) Absolutely not! Sorry.

> How do you set the drive number of the MIO hardware or software.

(ICD-Mike) The drive numbers (D1-D8) are set up by the MIO configuration...each drive number can be one of the following:
1. Hard drive (set partition, controller ID, and unit number)
2. RAM drive (set size)
3. Floppy drive (set actual floppy number... i.e. D4: could be floppy unit #1, but no software can tell the difference
4. Unassigned... in which case it will access the regular ID as it normally would without the MIO

(Chmn Keith) Also, Jerry, I might add that the "config" program is resident. All you have to do is hit SELECT/RESET and up it pops!

> Will software designed for the Newell upgrade or RAMBO XL work on it?

(ICD-Mike) No, the RAM is a "true" RAM disk... just like a floppy, therefore you do not need to "setup" the RAM disk as you did with the RAMBO/NEWELL with the RD type of command.

(Chmn Keith) but, you can STILL do an RD command along with the MIO.. right, Mike?

(ICD-Mike) Sure, the RD is ONLY for internal memory of the computer the MIO is a TOTALLY independent system. It handles its own RAM in a fashion best suited for the disk emulation and printer buffer.

> What's the physical setup for the MIO like?

(ICD-MIKE) The MIO sits behind the computer on a 3-4 inch ribbon cable... this is due to noise level of lines from the computer.

> How about the 80-column adaptor?

(ICD-Mike) The 80 col board will plug into the MIO box and should be out in 2-3 months. It will be compatible at the E: level through the CIO just like the ATARI XEP80 [and ACE80- ED.].

We plan on giving more than ATARI's version (like all our products).

(KEITH) Will the 80 col display be able to be used with custom display lists?

(ICD-MIKE) No, display lists are things for ANTIC and 40 cols ONLY. It takes custom chips for stuff like that and is intended for game type stuff. If you wanted, you can program the video controller for te 80 col and get theings like scrolling and setting display beginning pointer.

(Chmn KEITH) (or term program status lines")

> Will the 80 col board be color?

MIKE: It will be at least RGB (the design hasn't been finalized yet... we aren't sure how far to go with it...)

(Chmn KEITH) In closing, I can tell you that that the MIO is a really incredible piece of hardware. I have mine configured for (get ready to drool... hehe) a 128k print buffer and a 895k ramdisk which i BOOT from. It's great!

Industry Report

** COMPUSERVE SERVES NOTICE - SORTA

In an emotionally charged article in the October 6 issue of INFOWORLD MAGAZINE, it was reported that a bulletin board system operator was being SUED by COMPUSERVE INFORMATION SERVICES (CIS). It was alleged that the operator was told to close his board and answer in court for MERELY OFFERRING PUBLIC DOMAIN PROGRAMS that appeared in the CIS download areas. CIS was claiming a COPYRIGHT on EVERY item of information, text, or program uploaded to them.

This shocking item would have repercussions at most levels in clubs and BBS's across the country- if it were accurate (it was NOT). HOT letters, articles, and editorials screaming about "another CIS blast against the users" erupted from all over Computerdom. Several writers contacted the CIS legal and management departments where they were told by David Kishler, Assistant Manager of Editorial Services, that indeed CIS DID claim a "global copright" on everthing that crossed their wires.

Said Kishler, "We have a copyright that is registered covering all material on our system, and that prohibits redistribution by others... for someone to take a public domain program,

download it from COMPUSERVE, and then upload it to another system-- that is where we have our objections." He continued, "by the very subscription [the user] agrees to that policy." This of course just further fueled the fires.

I contacted Keith Ledbetter, author of many programs in the public domain and also offered on CIS to see what he thought of the fray. He responded immediately, "the position of SIG*ATARI is that all files in our data libraries are available for use on any BBS system consistent with any restrictions placed on them by the author of the program... SIG*ATARI totally supports a cooperative relationship between the local Atari BBS system and our SIG. ...Feel free to download and/or upload to our sigs to your hearts desire!"

Finally, the word on just what happened came out directly from one of the persons involved. Neil Shapiro, System Operator of the MICRO

NETWORKED APPLE USERS' GROUP (MAUG), one of the biggest forums within CIS, put it straight.

The author of a COPYRIGHTED program that is offered on CIS with a special noted condition of NO FURTHER REDISTRIBUTION contacted CIS to complain that his program was being distributed by a BBS without permission. Further, the author said that there were many othe NON-PUBLIC DOMAIN programs on the same BBS.

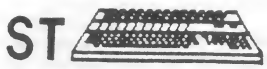
Shapiro was asked by CIS to call the BBS to verify, where he found not only the programs in question but also a bulletin from the SysOp offerring the collected works of CIS, GEnie, Delphi, and other services for anyone who would pay him $25 rather than join any of the pay services. The SysOp went further and left messages on other systems offering his commercial redistribution service.

CIS's lawyers sent the SysOp a letter pointing out that he was violating some copyrights of the non-public domain materials he was offering. They also advised him that his commercial resdistribution of commercial compilations was in violation of CIS's "global copyright", that is, their rights to the value of thier service as a set of "collected works". CIS did NOT tell th SysOp to take down his board, nor did they take any legal action. That part was apparently added by the SysOp to spice up the story.

When all the dust settled, CIS seems to have done exactly as they should have. INFOWORLD, on the other hand, MAY look forward to some heat from the BIG "C" for reporting an unresearched piece that certainly will cost CIS some image points nationwide, despite the "REAL FACTS".

Once anything like this gets started, particularly when it is about a group that is doing well and making money, no amount of explanation can undo the harm and attitude readjustment that has already occured. Why do people want to believe the worst? On various message bases both around town and nationally, a distinct dissapointment (and considerable disbelief of the explanation) has been expressed over and over. One sums up the tone of most: "Gee, I was all set to hate CIS, and now I guess I have to find some other reason..."

I am sure, with that attitude, that the writer of that line WILL find SOME reason to hate CIS. Another one bites the dust.



ST CORNER
By Gil Merciez

I don't get into Lansing all that much, but when I do I usually stop at Pro Video (which moved and changed its name to Central Park Computers) and Castle Communications just to see what sort of ST software Mid Michigan has to offer. My latest visit was a big disappointment.

Castle Communications was closed at 12:30 pm when it was supposed to open at noon. Central Park Computers had a meager display of 20-30 items, the overwhelming majority being games. To further raise my ire, the selection of Amiga software was twice that of the ST's. This leads me to believe that this dealer's support for the Amiga is stronger than for the ST's. His sales must justify it; or is it the higher profit margins on the Amiga hardware? This lack of software support drives many owners to the mail order houses. While most retail stores will special order programs, why bother when you can order mail order at usually a much better price.

Most of the crazies who don't care about the current availability of software have bought either the ST or Amiga depending on their preferences. The snob, lemming, and yuppie classes have stuck with the Mac, Apple II's, and the IBM. Most computer shoppers are looking at how much software is available for a machine. If they can't readily see it, they will head to another machine.

Walk into any Toys R Us and gaze behind the glass case at the 520 ST. A small sign announces the availability of a COMPLETE selection of ST software in the next aisle. The last time I counted, I believe they stocked between 12 and 15 titles. Would you buy a computer that's been on the market for well over a year and had a COMPLETE selection of 12-15 titles?

The latest Amiga World lists 370 commercial software releases that are either supposed to be shipping or are RSN (real soon now) vaporware. A comparable ST list is now approaching 700 titles. Reliable(?) sales estimates of the Amiga range from around 100 to 150 thousand with most of those sales in the U.S. while ST sales have been estimated between 200 and 260 thousand with approximately 60% overseas. It seems that U.S. sales are roughly equivalent. Neither machine has taken the world by storm, yet the press has branded the ST a success, while the Amiga sales have been regarded as disappointing. Much of this comes from the prior expectations of how the two machines would be accepted by the consumer.

Most observers were skeptical of Atari even shipping the ST let alone selling it in mass quantities. The Amiga was initially hyped as God's gift to the computer industry. And now along comes the Apple //gs.

SAVE THE DINOSAUR

The Apple //gs is an interesting attempt at keeping an outdated and thoroughly out-classed cash cow from being trampled by the new generation of computers. Using the 65816 chip which retains compatability with the 6502, Apple has managed to update their II series to give the perceived impression that it can now compete with the sexier machines. To a large degree, Apple will be very successful.

The Apple //gs in 16 bit mode offers the same resolution as the ST (16 colors in 320 X 200 bit mode and 4 colors in 640 X 200 bit mode) with the same 4096 color palette as the Amiga. It's sound chip from the Mirage Ensoniq synthesizer is the most sophisticated ever put in a personal computer and is supposed to comparable to the fabled Amy chip from Atari. In 8 bit mode it can run upwards of 90% of the thousands of Apple II commercial program.

There are two kickers to this, however. The most apparent is the outrageous price for this wonder, $1,800-2,000. The other kicker is the speed of the machine. According to those who have played with the //gs for the past couple of months, it runs at a snail's pace next to the 68000 machines. While the static graphics (ie pictures) are impressive, the //gs lacks the processor speed or custom chip support for any sort of useful animation. The disk drive speeds are also reportedly fairly slow. Using the color monitor that comes with the system, the 80 column text output has washed out appearance with artifacting of the text evident.

A stroke of genius on Apple's part is the $499 board that enables the estimated 1.5 million //e owners to upgrade to the //gs. Apple will do very well with the //gs and will continue to earn millions off of the aged dinosaur. I would like to be wrong, but I estimate that by next year at this time the //gs will have outstripped the combined sales of the Amiga and the ST since their introduction.

The only clear advantage of the //gs lies in its sound capabilities. A $299 (or less) Casio CZ101 eliminates that advantage, however, and you still have an extra $700-1,000 to blow on software, a hard drive, etc. I'll stick with the ST.

8 EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Computer Games for Gamers - Atari 800
by Brian Goluska

At the last regular Atari meeting someone was discussing a game that they didn't like. They said that the play system (action of stick-hand-human-game) was poor.

"How does it compare to OPERATION WHIRLWIND?" I asked.

"Huh?" they said. And I realized that people are missing out on enjoyable software, just because the software was popular before they got their computers.

So this month and next, I'm going to describe some computer games, and give them my personal rating. I hope that it might help some Atari owners, especially gamers, to find games that they may otherwise have overlooked.

First, I have to describe the GGRS (Goluska's Game Rating System): All games are rated in comparison to 3 games of bowling, 1 1/2 hours at the bowling alley. If you bowl for an hour and a half, it costs about $5. Therefore a $40 game must be worth 8 trips to the bowling alley (3 games each) to break even. However, if 2 people play, it only takes 4 trips to the bowling alley (4 times 1 1/2 = 6 hours) to break even.

Some non-gamers may have a problem understanding the GGRS, because they have a mental set that says computer games are expensive. They think that $40 for a game is high. Yet they will bowl or golf for a much higher dollar per hour rate. Of course, since I'll describe games that were released during different time periods, the sticker price is not material (Miner 2049er has been priced as low as $5). Some of the titles I like best may not be currently available.

All of the comments below represent my personal opinion.

OPERATION WHIRLWIND - 40 hours. GGRS = 25 trips to the bowling alley.

This is for the experienced gamer, not a novice. Scenario is a 2 battalion tactical panzer assault. Not an arcade game, but joystick controlled with well done visuals and movement system.

EASTERN FRONT - ORIGINAL - GGRS = 80 trips to the bowling alley.

At a club meeting 4 years ago, someone wanted to see Eastern Front. I had it with me, and started to talk about strategy. They stopped me, and said they only wanted to see the seasons change. So I just ended each turn until Fall came, and the screen turned mud colored, and then Winter came, with the rivers freezing white farther and farther south. The onlookers made appreciative noises.

Eastern Front is not recommended for watching seasons change. It is recommended for the semi-serious gamer. If the gamer can understand "attack factor", "defense factor", and "movement factor", Eastern Front is very enjoyable.

MINER 2049er - GGRS = 20 trips to the arcade.

An early arcade style game, very good for its purposes. Any 800 owner with children 4 to 60 should own it. Only available on the Atari - no Commodore or IBM equivalent.

STAR RAIDERS - ?

This is so old, it can't be rated. It was originally worth 20 trips to the bowling alley to me. It actually cost me $600, because it helped me decide to buy my first Atari 800. Though Star Raiders may now seem old hat, when it first appeared it represented several levels of advance in graphics appearance over any other micro computer programs.

MULE - GGRS = 1 year countryclub membership.

I have not played any computer game more than MULE. It is best on a 4 joystick Atari with 4 players. MULE can have strategy within strategy for those who really want to WIN it. Those of you who subscribed to Energy in the past can read Ralph Fellows' 7 part article on MULE strategy in your back issues. Not as tough to learn to play as Operation Whirlwind or Eastern Front, MULE is more suitable for casual fun.

JUMPMAN - GGRS = 30 trips to the bowling alley.

An arcade game, sort of like Miner except the game SHOOTS AT YOU as you try to solve the puzzles. More screens than Miner (it came out much later). It also allows several players to take turns on each screen. Do not confuse this with the JUMPMAN JUNIOR sequel, which is harder and has less screens (although JJ might be OK for a hard core player who has exhausted JUMPMAN and wants more).

ULTIMA III - GGRS = 80+ trips to the bowling alley.

ULTIMA III could also require a lot more time, if you actually want to finish the game. It is a role playing game where up to 4 "characters" explore, combat, use magic, and develop attributes. A classic. I found it best when several players each create a character, and direct that character's action. Although only one human can run the keyboard at a time, it can work pretty well with one keying for 4 players, taking verbal instructions from the others. This also allows taking turns at the keyboard, and spreading out the hard work. ULTIMA I, II, and IV are not rated.

DEADLINE - GGRS = 20 trips to the bowling alley.

A "text adventure", one of the first to appear to include time and timing as part of the adventure. (If you're walking around outside at 8 a.m. you meet the neighbor, and get information. If you wait until 9 a.m. before you go out you don't meet the neighbor or get the information). In this adventure you're a detective trying to solve a murder.

Semi-rated: All other text adventures. If you play one for a while, you can decide whether or not you want to play more. Some are better than others. I enjoyed PLANETFALL. I thought that some others were too strict - if every action but one kills your character, then you have no choice but to follow the script, and that is boring. To me, the best text adventures allow the illusion of "wandering around" and "free will", along with allowing rational choices to get better results than random choices. But each to their own, try one and see if you like it.

All text adventures have the disadvantage that they are text. You have to decide for yourself just how to scale that against your bowling hours.

Next month I will rate some more "antique software". Atari owners can get a tremendous enjoyment value for their dollar by buying yesterday's software at today's prices.

Atari Technical

Compiled by John Nagy and Steve Godun

Reports have started coming in about problems with using the XM-301 modem at the same time as using ICD's P:R: CONNECTION. It seems that unexpected error 138's (timeouts) may be due to insufficient power, as both units are powered by the computer. As the power supplies are the prime weak spot on the XL series in particular, this may become a problem, especially with power-eating memory upgrades. Sadly, the REPAIRABLE power supply models are also the ones with a high enough output that they typically don't need repair. Early 800 supplies are sealed, but have a solder-in fuse inside the black box. It can be replaced easily enough, but your box will never look the same!

I recently pulled "Silent Service" by Micro-Prose Inc. out of my archives for another play, but something was wrong. The game was loading slowly and erratic graphics appeared and disappeared. When the game scenario started, I discovered I had no keyboard input! Stop...re-boot...ditto the second time. Bad disk! I spent $1.30 on postage and sent my disk, along with $10.00 to cover the cost of replacement, to the company. At last, the new disk arrived! But wait, I was having the same problem loading and running as with the first disk. The problem must be at my end. So, what was different about my system now than when I last ran the program successfully? There was only one thing. I now had a XM 301 modem in my daisy chain. So, I disconnected the modem. Eureka! The program ran flawlessly. Apparently this program uses illegal commands to that the modem messes up. This is unfogivable. Needless to say, a letter to the company is forthcoming... But beware this XM301 potential for problems!

Some ST owners are having trouble uploading to ATARI BBS's. The problem seems due to the "full implementation" of XMODEM protocol in the ST terminals, while the 8-bit systems use a modified system. To get your ST to begin an upload, try pressing CONTROL/U at the beginning of the transfer. This gives the recieving BBS the signal that you are ready to send. It has solved the problem for many users, but not all. Early versions of STTALK won't let you get your kepress through. Like XETERM for the 8-bit, it is relegated to uploading only to BBS's that DO NOT use the old "ATARI STANDARD".

If your printer uses a cloth ribbon, especially one that may cost you $7 per ribbon, then this is for you. Unwind the ribbon on newspaper (if it's in a cartridge, just open the cartridge but DO NOT unwind it) and spray a light, even coat of ink spray on it. Your letters will be as good as new. Be sure to let the ribbon dry overnight, and then rewind it by hand. Ink spray can be purchased at any hobby store and some Radio Shacks. Want an even better, cheaper way? Do the same thing, except use WD-40. The WD-40 will break up the dried ink particles and restore the ribbon to nearly brand new!

There's an easy way to disable the BREAK key so that a BASIC program can't be listed. All you need are two POKEs:

```
POKE 16,64:POKE 53774,247
```

The problem with this is that whenever you execute a screen command (GRAPHICS 0, OPEN #1,8,0,"S:"), you have to turn BREAK off again. But wait! If you have an XL or XE computer, "POKE 566,158" will turn BREAK off for good, and "POKE 566, 146" will turn it on again.

If you would like to have lines that your programs now print on your screen to go to your printer instead, try this, either inside the program or in immediate mode:

```
(for 400 + 800 users)
POKE 838,166:POKE 839,238
(and to go back to the screen)
POKE 838,163:POKE 839,246

(for XL + XE users)
POKE 838,202:POKE 839,254
(and back...)
POKE 838,163:POKE 839,242
```

This is MUCH faster than trying to make all the PRINTS into LPRINTS (and back!!)

Here's another quick and dirty trick- reboot anytime without dropping power from any DOS. Just choose "RUN AT ADDRESS" and give the address E477. WHAMMO. You are instantly rebooting booting a new disk without loss of the ACTUAL CONTENTS of any ramdisk, although you will have to run the ramdisk handler again. Don't use one that formats automaitcally or you r effort is wasted! This is also handy to save wear on the power switch and "cooling time" on XE and upgraded XL machines that normally want to be off for at least 15 seconds.

Did you forget to hold OPTION down when you booted, and now don't want to find a disk with DOS and DUP on it? From BASIC, type:

```
OPEN #1,4,0,"D:FILENAME.EXT":X=USR(5576)
```

Neat and handy!

JK FEATURE OF THE MONTH JK

Review

SpartaDOS Construction Set
Reviewed by Cecil Alton - WACUG

CURRENT NOTES FEBRUARY, 1986

SpartaDOS (by ICD, Inc.), meaning "power" DOS, is aptly named. Version 2.3 for the Atari XL/XE 8-bit line is the most powerful DOS I have ever used on the Atari and is the most exciting new product I have used since BASIC.

The SpartaDOS Construction Set comes with two disks, version 1.1 and version 2.3, and a well written user's manual. The only criticism I have about the user's manual is that there is no index. This is offset by a detailed Table of Contents. The bound manual has 20 chapters in which good examples abound and 9 appendices, including a glossary and a table of all SpartaDOS command processor (CP) commands.

Version 1.1 of SpartaDOS runs on the Atari 400/800 and requires a minimum of 24k bytes RAM. Version 2.3 runs on the Atari 800XL and 130XE. Version 1.1 does not directly handle Atari DOS 2.0 files at all (except to convert DOS 2.0 files to a SpartaDos 1.1 format, and vice versa), and for this reason I don't particularly recommend SpartaDOS unless you plan to upgrade to an XL/XE computer.

Version 2.3, however, can read, write, and run Atari DOS 2.0 formatted diskettes in both single and true double density. Version 2.3 also provides lots of other extras - 14 new internal and 16 new external commands, a sophisticated user-friendly DOS command menu, and an additional 4K bytes of program area. It supports up to 8 drives.

Version 2.3 is 11K larger in size than version 1.1 and uses overlays beneath the OS ROMs in the XL/XE computers, so it won't work on 400/800 units. And there are two versions of 2.3. XD23C.DOS which recognizes the STARTUP.BAT batch file when booted and control is given to DOS (rather than the cartridge). XC23C.DOS is the same as XD23B.DOS except that AUTORUN.SYS is recognized when booted and control priority is given to the cartridge and STARTUP.BAT is not supported.

Both SpartaDOS versions support time and date stamping of files and give file sizes in bytes. Unused disk space is given in sectors.

Other advantages offered by this feature-loaded product include an Atari-logo binary file loader, support for up to 128 files, and Ultra Speed I/O, the latter available if you're using a 1050 drive modified with ICD's US Doubler double-density up-grade. Ultra Speed formatting with US Doubler enhanced drives optimizes the skew so that 3.5 sectors in single density and 3 sectors in double density can be read in one revolution. Normal double density drives can read only one sector per revolution, so this represents a 3X speed increase in I/O!

Highlights. The SpartaDOS user is greeted with the "D1:" prompt upon booting up. Type "CAR" and command is shifted to the BASIC cartridge. Type "DOS" and the "D1:" prompt appears in the flick of an eye. YES! SpartaDOS is RAM resident! The RAM resident portion of SpartaDOS provides immediate access to all internal commands.

Table 1: Internal Commands

?DIR (show DIRectory path)	ERASE
AINIT (Atari DOS 2.0 INITiate)	LOAD
APPEND	LOCK
BASIC (install or remove BASIC)	PAUSE
BOOT (BOOT a program at startup)	PRINT
CAR (exit from DOS to CARtridge)	PROTECT
CHKDSK (CHecK DiSK info)	RENAME
COPY	RUN
CREDIR (CREate subDIRectory)	SAVE
CWD (Change Working Directory)	TYPE
DELDIR (DEL empty subDIRectory)	UNLOCK
DIR (DIRectory)	UNPROTECT
DIRS (Short DIRectory)	VERIFY
MEM (display MEMLO and MEMHI)	
XDIV (disable batch processing & the PRINT command)	

Table 2: External Commands

AT_RS232	boot RS232 handler for ATR8000
CHTD	CHange file's Time and Date stamp
CHVOL	CHange VOLume name
DIS_BAT	DISable BATch processing
DUMP	display file in HEX and ATASCII or ASCII format
DUPDSK	DUPlicate DiSK
FORMAT	format version 1.1 disks
INIT	INITiate version 1.1 disks
KEY	install 32 character KEYboard buffer on non-XL/XE computers
MDUMP	display Memory DUMP
MEMLO	display MEMLO bounds
MENU	see below
OFF_LOAD	OFFset file LOAD
PORT	set parameters for RS232 communications
PUTRUN	make command files into 'load and run' files for running under Atari DOS 2.0
RD130	RamDisk 130XE
RDAXLON	RamDisk AXLON
RDBASIC	RamDisk BASIC
RPM	display disk drive RPM
RS232	boot RS232 handler for Atari 850
SET	SET time
SPCOPY	COPY files between SpartaDOS and/or Atari DOS 2.0 formats
TD	display Time and Date with optional R-TIME 8 clock/calendar cartridge
TIME	display time and date at top of screen
TREE	display directory paths
TSET	SET Time and date with R-TIME 8 cartridge
UNERASE	recover deleted files

XCOPY	similar to SPCOPY but intended for use with version 2.3
XINIT	INITiate version 2.3 diskettes
XKEY	install 32 character KEYboard buffer on XL/XE computers
XTD	load time and date with R-TIME 8 cartridge.

Internal commands are those which are directly accessible by the RAM resident command processor. For example, <DIR> (DIRectory) and <ERASE> (file erase). There are 28 internal commands in version 2.3. External commands are SpartaDOS commands which must be loaded from the system disk each time they are used. Examples are <FORMAT> (format disk) and <CHVOL> (CHange VOLume name), There are 32 external commands. Incredible! A DOS with 60 commands available! To describe each command would require duplicating the user's manual. A list of the internal and external commands, however, will convey a portent of SpartaDOS's power.

You may have noticed something peculiar in some of the filenames. Yes, "_" is a legal filename character as well as numbers "0..9". Thus,"4TH.B_F" is a legal filename

RAM Disk SpartaDos allows you to set-up a Ramdisk device. <RDBASIC> provides an 8K ramdisk for XL/XE computers usable while internal BASIC is installed. <RD130> sets up a 64k ramdisk on the 130XE (507 sectors). <RDAXLON> is used if you have Axlon's RAMPOWER 128 board installed in your 800. It sets up the board as a 112K ramdisk (only works with version 1.1).

Batch Files. Another nice feature supported by SpartaDOS is the batch file. A batch file contains executable DOS instructions (internal and external commands). It can be created with a word processing program or with the Screen Editor using the "COPY" command. The "TYPE" command is used to view the contents of the batch file. A batch file could be used to load an RS232 handler, go to the BASIC cartridge, and then RUN a communications program. When one realizes that there 60 SpartaDOS commands available, the possibilities for creating batch files becomes almost mind boggling. A batch file given the name STARTUP.BAT can be used to initialize things for a particular disk. The keystrokes to create a batch file for setting the time and date on drive 1 looks as follows:

```
COPY E: D:STARTUP.BAT
TIME
SET
<CTRL + 3> writes the file to the SpartaDOS disk.
```

To execute a batch file, type a dash (-) and the filename. It is not necessary to type the extension if it is ".BAT".

Subdirectories. The ability to create subdirectories is one of SpartaDos most important and useful features. Now, files can be grouped by type under a subdirectory. This can be a particularly useful feature since SpartaDOS allows up to 128 files per diskette, and it can be especially useful for organizing files on a system with a hard disk drive. There need be no more files scrolling off the screen when listing the directory. Using the LOGOMENU function, the OPTION key cycles the directories on the screen.

The create subdirectory command <CREDIR> is used to set up a subdirectory under a specific drive and directory. For example, "CREDIR D2:UTILITY" creates a subdirectory on drive 2 called "UTILITY". The command "CREDIR D2:UTILITY>DISK" sets up a subdirectory "DISK" under the pre-existing subdirectory, "UTILITY". The <CWD> command changes the current (working) directory and the <TREE> command displays all the directory paths found on the diskette or under the specified subdirectory.

LOGOMENU. LOGOMENU is used to create a special binary file loader. This is great for binary file games. LOGOMENU can handle up to 16 directories, each with up to 64 files (if you don't run out of disk space first!). Instructions in the user's manual are easy to follow.

DOS Menu Operation. This is another of the reasons I like SpartaDOS! The <MENU> command loads a menu utility which provides most of the features of the command processor, but in a menu form. It is capable of single and multiple file functions; e.g., 5 of 10 files on a drive 1 can be flagged for copying to drive 2 in one operation. The multiple file function can be performed with <COPY>, <ERASE>, <PROTECT>, etc. OPTION selects the next bank of commands and SELECT moves the cursor through the bank of commands. Pressing RETURN or START performs the selected function.

Atari DOS 2.0 Files. The only problem with SpartaDOS is working with Atari DOS 2.0 files. Version 1.1 only supports copying of Atari DOS 2.0 files. This is done with the SPCOPY command. Version 2.3 can read, write, copy, and execute Atari DOS 2.0 files. Migrating Atari DOS 2.0 files to SpartaDOS disk files can be a tedious process. Every "super" deal has its catch! On the bright side, version 2.3 has all the needed DOS 2.0 handlers required to achieve full functionality for most users. The <AINIT> command is used to write an Atari DOS 2.0 style format. Either the command processor, <XCOPY>, or the <COPY> function of the SpartaDOS menu is used for single or dual drive file transfers between SpartaDOS and/or Atari DOS 2.0 compatible formats (with few restrictions on density and number of tracks). Atari users accustomed to using disk utilities such as DISKEY may also be disappointed since the SpartaDOS format is not compatible with existing disk utilities (disk mapping, directory management and sector linking differs from standard DOS 2.0).

Summary. Overall, this is a fine product and I highly recommend it for XL/XE users. SpartaDOS costs about $30, $60 with the US Doubler. The increase in I/O speed by 300 percent alone makes this a worthwhile investment for those who own 1050 drives equipped with the US Doubler enhancement.

COMPUTER MUSIC

MIDITALK
By: Mitchell Wells

Sorry that there was no article from me last month, but in case you haven't heard, I bought an ST. Because I have no way to easily give the editors of this fine magazine an ST file that they can print out, there was a month lag before I could get back with it. But expect some articles and reviews for ST users about current MIDI software and trends, as well as Info for 8 bit users.

Last month I promised that I would tell how cheaply you can set up your own MIDI system. Well, because of some recent developments locally, I won't talk about software and hardware for the 8 bit (yet... but look for some new and exciting software and hardware). But I will tell you about a keyboard that will set you up with an entire band for under $350.00! And also I'll tell you about the cheapest software for the ST. Unbelievably, it's under $70.00 (I bought it at Castle Communications for $62.00).

As for the keyboard: It's the Casio CZ230S, and Elderly Instruments has it for $325.00. What will it do? Well, check this out: It has 100 preset sounds that are great. These are the same digital sounds that have made CZ101 famous and much used in many small studios. It also works in the same manner as the CZ101 with MIDI: It will play four different sounds simultaneously. By that I mean it will play one voice as bass, one as guitar, one as piano and one as strings if you wish. But more than that, it has an internal programmable drum machine! And the drum sounds are also great because they're PCM digital recordings of real drums! Although the voices are monophonic (when used in the multi-voice MIDI mode), they're rich, full voices produced by a bone-fide synthesizer. And not only are the drums programmable, there are 20 preset rhythms and an intro/fill key which will do short drum solos for you. The manual is relatively easy to understand, and if enough people approach me, I'll be glad to do a demo with this unit. It, of course, has full MIDI implementation.

As for the software, it's HYBRID ARTS EASYTRACK ST. This is a 20 track MIDI recorder that works just like a 20 track tape recorder. It is GEM-based and graphic oriented. The manual is short and easy to understand, and it's the perfect software for beginners who want to record and compose music in real time. For those who want to start using MIDI with their ST, but are not musicians or musically oriented, I suggest ACTIVISION'S MUSIC STUDIO. There's no real-time input of music, but it too is mouse-based and notes are entered on a musical staff, so you could just go to your local music store, buy your favorite sheet music, and duplicate the music onto the screen. Neither of these programs are very powerful, but they are cheap! And they will more than get you going if you are considering MIDI with your ST. As for the 8 bit users who are thinking about buying the Casio CZ230S and using it with their computer, hopefully next month I'll have some more good news. Till then...
mitch

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NETWORK SERVICES....GAMES COMPUTERS PLAY
by Jerry Cross

This is the first of several articles describing the many on-line services available to Atari users. Rather than give a complete description of each service, I will try to highlight what is available to the Atari user, and whatever background info you may be interested in.

This month I will discuss the fairly new on-line service called GAMES COMPUTERS PLAY. Started about 2 years ago, this is a very different type of on-line service.

First, everything you see on the screen is in graphics. No, not the Atascii characters you see on some bbs's, but ships, tanks, playfields, rooms, hallways, and robot drones. All of the graphic information is contained on two double-sided disks. Whenever the system needs to display a room or graphic it will access the drive and load in the data. It would take way too long to transmit this over the modem.

This leaves the host computer to do all of the player graphics and update any screen data. Not only do you see your own robot, but also the robots of each user currently on the network. for example, if you are in the post office there could also be another user there. You can stop and chat with him, or simply go on to your mailbox.

GCP has most of the features you see on the other network services, including a simple to use E-mail system, a rapidly growing public domain library (with extremely easy up/down menu's) and best of all, GAMES!

There are currently 3 games available.

LORDS OF SPACE

This is a multi-player space exploration, expansion and conquest game. It is a continuing game where you may come and go as you please. It is not played in one sitting; instead you may

enter the game at any time, play for as long as you like, leave and then come back later.

While you are gone, the planets you have fortified will defend themselves against other players, produce the raw materials and finished goods that you have assigned to them. When you return, your empire will still be there,. It may have grown or shrunk, depending on how long you have been gone, but you do not need to begin again.

The LOS galazy is divided into sectors. There are over 10,000 sectors available to explore. Each sector contains up to 8 systems, and each system contains up to 5 planets. So, as you can see, there is more than enough planets to go around.

When you first join the game you find yourself in the Empire Space station. The space station contains a general store to purchase materials, a bank, spaceship dealer, and the usual data-bases and post office.

You start out with a small Mark I space ship, and the Lord Master of Empire loans you 10,000 Stellars (the local currancy) which you must pay back. To do this, you must begin to earn some money. So, you hop in your spaceship and begin searching the galaxy for planets to colonize. Each planet is given a rating for it's ore, oil, and energy content. The higher the rating, the more ore it contains, and the faster you can mine it.

Remember, this game is played in real time. It will take about 1 week for your planet to produce enough material to purchase anything.

Once you have found 4 or 5 planets to develope, you place some mines and planet defenses on the planet, and then log off. After 1 week, you return to collect your ore, take it back to the space station, and sell it. You then use that money to buy more mines, develope more planets, sell the ore, buy more mines.....and on and on..

Eventually you will earn enough money to purchase a bigger ship, and then you can purchase your own factories. Place these factories on a planet with a good energy rating, and you are no longer dependant on the space station for your material. Your factories can produce anything from fuel, to engines. This can come in handy in the future when you improve your ship.

Meanwhile, while all this is happening, other players are searching out your brand new planets, just waiting to blast them to space dust, or raid your planet and steal your ore. As a new player, you are given a 30 day grace period. This prevents other players from attacking your planets untill you can get them developed. Eventually you will be able to pay off your loans, and maybe even buy your own space station!

In time you will be able to purchase a bigger ship. You can then begin attacking other planets or ships. The computer will figure out the damage depending on the firepower of your ship and the defenses of the planet you are attacking. It's possable to try attacking a planet, only to find your ship blown away! So be carefull who you pick fights with.

As you can see, this games is mostly strategy. You must plan your moves well in advance, and keep records of your progress. This is just like running a small business. If your factory planets run out of materials (ore or oil) they will shut down. You must keep track of their inventory. You must also defend your planets, and search for more planets when the resources of your older planets runs out.

There are also outside forces working against you. Currently, there is a big war going on between the USA (United Ship Alliance) and WASP (Warriors And Space Pirates). I found myself caught in the middle of this battle and lost a lot of planets.

For more imformation about GCP, or to find out how to sign up, check last month's MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE or ask on of your club officers.

CYBERWORLD

This is a combination tank/ship battle game. It is a multi-player game, and can have several players fighting at the same time. You must build your own tank using several different parts, such as lasers, missiles, hull armor, engines and so on. Each componant will cost a certain amount of money, and each takes up space. You must mix and match the different parts so they do not break your bankbook, and will fit in the tank itself.

The playfield is about three by two screens long, and there is plenty of room to move around. The object is to destroy as many opponants as you can, thus increasing your rank. This is not a text game, but an arcade type game. You will need fast reflexes to succeed.

BIOWAR

BioWar is an abstract game of cell growth, loosely based on Conway's Game of Life which appeared in Scientific American. Each player attempts to continue the growth of his cells, while trying to kill off the opposing players' cells.

BioWar can be played as a multi-player game with 2 to 6 players, or a single person can play by himself to get practice with the growth patterns of the cells.

This game hasn't quite caught on with GCP players. It's a fast thinking game, and you must be quick to place your cells correctly for the best advantage. Since I haven't been able to get any GCP players to play me, I can't really say how well the game is.

OTHER STUFF: Changes are always being made on GCP. Some new rules (still not finalized at press time) were being written to make the games more friendly.

GCP also plans to expand their system to include the ATARI ST users. This will be ready before Christmas.

And who knows, maybe if there is enough interest it could expand to other systems. But for now, there are no plans to expand beyond the ST computers.

SIGNUP: There are several ways to sign up for GCP. You can call them at (717)848-2660 (voice) and sign up over the phone. You will then be issued a password and sent your disks and manuals.

If you are in a hurry, and if you have a friend who is already a member, you can sign up on-line. Your friend supplies you with the game disks (you can make copies legally), and your password will be mailed out the next day.

If you are a member of a user group, GCP has a discount plan available. See your club officers for details.

The cost for sign-up is $30. You are given 3 hours of free time valued at $18. The on-line charges are $6 per hour (300 and 1200 baud), and you must have access to Tymnet (no surcharges). The system is available from 6:00pm EST to 5:00am EST, and all day Saterday and Sunday (and major holidays).

ST

ST SOFTWARE SNIPPETS
By Gil Merciez

The last month or so has seen veritable barrage of new ST releases both in productivity and entertainment software.

Origin Systems has released the ST version of Ultima III ($60). Many complained about the appearance of the graphics in Sierra's translation of Ultima II particularly the large expanses of white background. While Ultima II was translated to take advantage of the GEM interface, Origin stuck with a relatively straight translation of Ultima III, an enormous role playing strategy game.

The graphics have been somewhat enhanced to take advantage of the additional colors and resolution of the ST. The mouse can be used to guide your party which can speed up travelling time. Overall the feeling of gameplay is very similar to the other versions of Ultima III and I can give the ST adaptation of this classic high marks.

One undocumented and pleasantly surprising feature of the game is that the musical score is sent through the MIDI port so that if you have a synthesizer, you can customize and enjoy a greatly enhanced sound score. As is the rule with most games, the program is copy protected.

As mentioned last month, I've been playing around a bit with Regent Base (Regent Software $99). At the current time, I feel that this relational database program is promising but is not yet fully polished. The documentation that comes with the program leaves much to be desired. A tutorial is sorely needed to help the beginner construct a data base. I have heard that a tutorial type manual is now being written but I am not sure of how it will be distributed.

Implementation of the procedural file is dreadfully slow. Field length is too limited to be of much use in many situations. This problem can be worked around, but is not worth the effort. Regent Base does support a host of mathematical functions, however, and given some thoughtful revision and polishing could yet prove to be a workhorse database.

Datatrieve (Abacus $49) is another interesting addition to the growing data base ST library. Datatrieve uses the full GEM interface and allows you to construct a data base using different font styles and graphics. The size limitations regarding field and record lengths

present in Regent Base have been removed allowing a field of up to 32K and a 64K maximum record size. Like Regent Base the data files are disk bound allowing huge file sizes. The major deficiency at this point is the lack of support for mathematical functions. The documentation describes a rather full complement of math functions available with no apparent way to implement them at the current time.

Execution speed is much faster than the current version of Regent Base. It is not necessary to write a procedural command file which makes the program easier to use for beginners but could restrict its use for more advanced applications. Report writing capability appears to be fairly good with a wide variety of options available. Datatrieve appears to be another promising program that as of now fails to go the extra yard to be a complete package.

Timeworks has entered the ST market with a bang. ST Word Writer ($80) is a full featured, GEM Based, "What-you-see-is-what-you-get," word processor that at first glance bears a striking similarity in both appearance and operation to First Word. Don't be fooled by this, however, as Word Writer is a much more powerful package which will fill the word processing needs of all but the most demanding writing chores.

If you have been using First Word, you can move right to Word Writer with barely a glance at the excellent documentation. Appreciated features include the 85,000 word online spelling checker, a built in outline processor, and the ability to reformat the entire document as well as single paragraphs. An interesting feature is it's ability to act as sort of a pseudo print spooler to print the current file. Most options can be accessed in three different ways, drop down menus, clicking on one of the 34 boxes that fill three rows at the bottom of the screen, or function keys and keystrokes in combination with the Alternate key.

As with all packages, however, Word Writer is missing a few features that would have increased its value even more; multi-column printing capability, the ability to define macro commands for commonly used words and phrases, and a graphic integration feature. Despite these few drawbacks, Word Writer is the nicest word processor to yet appear for the ST.

I've just started playing around with Starglider ($40) from Rainbird Software. This is a fast paced arcade game in the Star Raiders tradition that features digitized music and voice and impressive 3D vector graphics that will send your head spinning. You are in command of the last remaining spaceship, an antique Airborne Ground Attack Vehicle (AGAV), of the planet Novenia, which has been plundered by an Egron assault force. An accompanying novella written by British sci-fi writer, James Follet, tells the story as well as providing some much needed hints. Game play takes place both on and above the Novenian planet which is divided into a 100 by 100 sector grid. Thusfar the game has been impressive, but I need more time with it to determine if can hold my interest over an extended period.

The loser of the month is from Paradox Software, Ltd, an English software house that has recently released at least 3 ST titles to fill the arcade game void. Space Station ($36) is a tired rehash of the overused multiple level platform game. The graphics are catchy but the game play quickly becomes boring. Original triangular packaging and music fed through the MIDI port do little to save this game from becoming a tedious exercise in futility.

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Last Hacks

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Thinking About Computers
By: Bob Haynes

SHAKESPEARE: THE FIRST ATARIAN?

Most people remember the events of today. Historians remember the past. Truly great minds remember the future.

William Shakespeare, one of the truly great minds of any time, ranged far into the future in telling his tales, if only his audiences could have read the message. Today, our hindsight immediately spots the remarkable predictions of the Bard. His remarks about computers are especially compelling.

In Henry IV, Part II we find this description of a fully configured computer system: "With all appliances and means to boot." On the downside, it is obvious that Shakespeare forsaw many of the problems that computerists of the future would face: "The cable broke..." (Henry VI, Part III); "Tush! Tush! Fear boys with bugs..." (The Taming of the Shrew); "We must take the current when it serves or lose all our ventures" (Julius Caesar); "With this regard their currents turn awry..." (Hamlet).

On the other hand, he accurately predicted many of the useful functions of the computer:

*Mailing lists: "I think there be six Richmonds in the field... "(Richard III)

*CALC-style programs: "I saw him fumble with the sheets... "(Henry V)

*CAD/CAM: "We first survey the plot, then draw the model..." (Henry IV, Part II)

Concerning programming, Wily Will had the following to say:

*"They have been at a great feast of languages..." (Love's Labour's Lost)

*"Superfluous branches we lop away..." (Richard II)

*"The END crowns all..." (Troilus and Cressida)

*"Yet lives out PILOT still..." (Henry VI, Part III)

Disk drives and other peripherals did not escape his attention, either. In Titus Andronicus we learn about "those dreary dumps", an obvious reference to crashed modem transmissions. Deleting useless programs from disks rates this mention in Hamlet: "Yea, from the table of my memory I'll wipe away all trivial fond records." Concerning the recent mania for RAM upgrades, he observes, "He shall have a noble memory..." (Coriolanus). In Henry VI, Part II, we find the following nod to the world of dot matrix and letter quality: "Thou hast caused printing to be used."

But what sort of home computer would Shakespeare buy if he were alive today? It's pretty clear what he would not buy. Plain for all to read in The Taming of the Shrew, The Immortal Bard of Avon penned these classic words: "There's small choice in rotten Apples...."

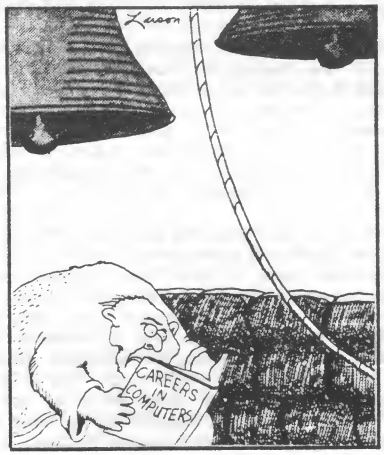
On the other hand, his preference for Atari is present everywhere in his writings. A few samples taken almost at random should suffice for illustration.

*On the need to suppress the keyboard sound on the 400/800: "Silence that dreadful bell! (Othello)

*On booting "Star Raiders" into memory: "The game is up!" (Cymbeline)

*On Atari's superior chip set: "To put an ANTIC disposition on..." (Hamlet).

Examples could be multiplied endlessly. But the perceptive reader gets the point. Shakespeare was an Atarian, not a toady for offbrands like IBM. And if it would have been good enough for Shakespeare, shouldn't Atari be good enough for everyone?



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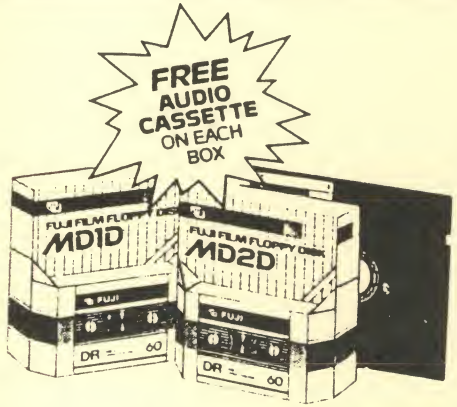

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Rumors

News from the FALL COMDEX includes the Monitor Box from JNL Technologies of Oceanside, NY. This box plugs into the video-out port on ANY ATARI ST computer and converts the signal to both composite video and RF. This makes it possible to use monitors other than Atari's brand, plus regular television sets, video recorders, projection TVs and other video equipment. The Monitor Box will sell for $59.95 when shipped in Jan. 1987. MORE COMDEX NEWS INSIDE THIS ISSUE OF MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!

MS.EM, a software based IBM emulator from Paradox Enterprises should begin to be available as you read this. Retailing for around $60-70 this package is supposed to offer a fairly good percentage of compatibility with IBM software, even being able to run 7 of the top 10 forms of copy protection. Being strictly software based, you would expect it to run noticeably slower than native IBM mode and according to reports, it is at least 30% slower. Another drawback is that it can't cope with the copy protection on Lotus 1- 2-3. Paradox also sells a 5 1/4" drive which plugs directly into an ST drive. For those drooling over the prospects of running IBM software, MS.EM may satiate you long enough until Atari releases their BBB (Big Blue Box).

MAGIC SAC is the market name of the ST MacCARTRIDGE that makes you ST think it's a Macintosh. They ARE available- minus the MAC ROM- for about $120. Add $30-$40 for a ROM you have to find on your own (try a MAC reapair place) and you can run many, but not all, Mac software. DATA PACIFIC lists the workable systems on the MAGIC SAC pak... Why MAGIC SAC? Apple agreed not to sue THAT name out of existance.

BATTERIES INCLUDED, makers of the PAPERCLIP word processor and many other titles, has abandoned copyprotection of any kind. Marty Herzog says his company, known for using a joystick port "key" for copy proofing software, will simply drop the ATARI line if piracy gets out of hand.

In case you haven't heard, most of the new products announced for 4th quarter delivery from Batteries Included including Paperclip Elite, BTS-The Spreadsheet, and Homepak have been pushed back until the first quarter of 1987. Santa won't be able to get any of these under your tree by Christmas.

Why was STAR RAIDERS II the same game many saw in a beta copy of THE LAST STARFIGHTER game? Sam Tramiel says it was economics. STARFIGHTER was never released, and the royalties on the name STAR RAIDERS was FAR less thatn those on STARFIGHTER (remember the movie...?) Still no answer as to WHY DID IT TAKE SO LONG.

The P:R: CONNECTION from ICD CORP, hailed by many as able to do anything an ATARI 850 could do, WON'T provide -12 volts (like an 850 will). That's required by SOME OLDER modems. It also won't work with SOME printer buffers (notably DIGITAL DEVICES). Be careful, and try to get a return privilege from your scource, just in case these problems stop YOU.

COMMODORE people have been irked by ATARI ads running in their Commodore magazines... the same ones that were run in the Atatri magazines this fall. At least they may have done SOME good in the Commodore mag... WE didn't need to see them!

It's been said that the purpose of the stock offerring by ATARI CORP is to raise money to buy COMMODORE. There is NO rational (or factual) support for this rumor.

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MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE is an independent newsletter published by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and is not affiliated in any way with Atari Corporation. Atari, the Fuji symbol and the names of various Atari computer equipment are trademarks of Atari Corporation.

This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

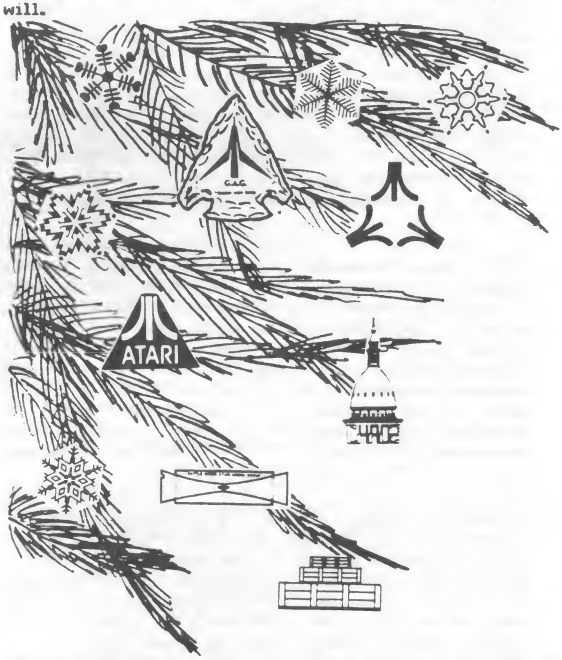
C.H.A.O.S.
Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
Rich Barnes - Managing Editor
(517) 349-0513

The chain remains unbroken! This month we would like to welcome the BATTLE CREEK ATARI USERS GROUP. As I have said many times before, this is your publication as well as ours. Welcome to the group. So far we have continued to expand with a new group joining with each of our past few issues. We have continued to increase our readership but as you can see this issue is smaller than many of our previous editions. We currently have a wealth of materials, but not the financial support to be able to print it all. Many ads were promised by member clubs for this issue that simply did not materialize. We depend on this advertising to finance each issue. We hope to continue to expand in the future and with your support and effort, we will.



As we rush headlong toward the Holidays and the New Year, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to all of you, Best Wishes for the Holidays! May you all celebrate them and enjoy them in your own special way. May this season and all of next year find you happy and safe.

Rich B.

Atari News

MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE adds another club to its roster this month- BATTLE CREEK ATARI USERS' GROUP (BCAUG). Negotiations are in progress with ATARI clubs in both GRAND RAPIDS and KALAMAZOO, and we hope to add them to the MAGAZINE in early 1987.

Elsewhere in ATARI publication news, the ATARI EXPLORER is back in print with new editors and staff. This time it is a totally separate commercial entity, having been sold by ATARI to DAVID AHL (formerly of CREATIVE COMPUTING). It is planned as a BI-MONTHLY magazine supporting both the 8- and 16- bit machines.

The first quarterly "Newsletter Disk" from OSS, Inc. (makers of ACTION! and BASIC XE) has been received with generally positive reviews. At $25 a year, it is almost useless to anyone not owning at least one of the company's language carts. Issue #1 included a grim editorial that almost begs the reader to write software for the 8-bit ATARI, since soon no one else will. [!!!!-ED.] Also included: bug sheets and question/answers for the language carts with suggested fixes; several programs showing off some neat tricks using ACTION!, BASIC XL/XE and MAC/65; ads for OSS's new line of "BAREWARE" cheap software; plus "News You Can Use", two pages of moderately out of date industry information.

INSOFT Disk Magazine is a monthly disk- based magazine for the ST user. Costing $50 a year, it features news, utilities, and programs primarily written in "C"... plus advertising. It has good reviews to date, and considering that at $4 an issue, you get a ST disk as well as the information on it, it can't be to bad a deal. Also included is a "membership" that entitles you to reduced prices on software and hardware purchases. INSOFT MAGAZINE, Boston, MA. 1-800-556-5580, 1-617-739-9012.

President Reagan signed the Electronic Communications Privacy Act (HR 4952 and S 2575), considered to be the most important privacy bill passed by Congress since the 1984 Cable Act. The new law ensures privacy rights for electronic communications, including cellular telephones, computer links and electronic mail. Specifically, it imposes civil and criminal penalties on individuals who intercept an electronic communication or access a computer to obtain private electronic communications without authorization. It also requires law enforcement officers to obtain a warrant or court order to tap wires or obtain information in a private electronic communication.

PC PURSUIT is now available in many parts of the country (even outside the major cities). For $25 a month plus a $25 sign-up fee, you can make unlimited long-distance modem calls to any BBS in 14 major area codes... over 2000 estimated BBS! Information by MODEM: 1-800-835-3001, VOICE: 1-800-368-4215.

You know that FUTURE SYSTEMS is the new owner of INDUS computer disk drives... but what about NATIONAL LOGIC? They bought the non-computer parts of INDUS when they folded this spring. The first of their products to be seen is the MIDI DJ, a midi sequencer with disk storage. Yup, the familiar black box has been refitted with different ROM and operating system to perform as a dedicated storage device for musicians.

ATARI INFO gleaned from the PAINE-WEBBER prospectus released as part of ATARI CORP's sale of 4 1/2 MILLION shares of common stock:

* "Over 150,000 ST computers" were reported to be sold by Sept. 15, 1986. This is about half of the published estimates to date.

* The Tramiel family will retain control over the company even after the sale. Jack will personally own over 45%.

* Over the last three years, 3 out of every 5 dollars earned by ATARI were earned overseas.

* Sale of video games ROSE to 27% of total net sales during 1986. Leftover product inventory from the WARNER days fell to 9% of net sales. Contrast that to the Christmas quarter of 1985 when that old inventory made up 61% of sales.

* Every director/executive officer (but one) of ATARI CORP is either an ex-Commodore employee or a member of the Tramiel family. The Executive Board (12 people) was paid over $900,000 not including benefits and stock options in 1985.

* Although one of the stated purposes of the stock issue is to pat back WARNER COMMUNICATIONS the 36 million dollar debt Jack Tramiel still owes them, ATARI will ALSO issue WARNER 7.1 million shares of common stock for a total value of $120 million. Warner will then own 25% of ATARI but ATARI won't owe Warner anything.

* 180 days after the original stock offering, nearly 22 million shares of common stock now held by the Tramiels and Warner will be eligible for sale. This availablility MAY affect the value of the initial stock offering.

Thanks, PAINE-WEBBER and BOB KELLY (CURRENT NOTES) for this information and analysis.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

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C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

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PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-3590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

PRESIDENT'S CORNER
by Leo Sell

The December general meeting of C.H.A.O.S. is always special. This year especially so. You will not want to miss it. We expect to have goodies to eat, and punch to drink. But that's not all. We will also have a FREE GIFT (if everything works out) for everyone attending. And, to thank you for your patronage all year, the Disk library will be offering regular disks at 2 for the price of 1. Business will be kept to a minimum. The emphasis will be on fun and fellowship. DON'T MISS THIS MEETING!!!

Have you noticed all of the bargains available on Atari software these days? Grab your holiday gift cash, and check out our advertisers, major chains such as Toys R Us and Sears, and advertisements in Antic and Analog. With a little care and shrewdness, you can get a lot of bang for your Atari buck right now.

We're looking forward to more and more progress as the year turns. C.H.A.O.S. is sponsoring a number of exciting projects. You too can be a part of ongoing ones, like the newsletter as well as the new ones as they come along. Jump in and get involved. You'll get more enjoyment than ever from your Atari and from C.H.A.O.S..

Here's to your health and to Atari computing. May they both be better and better as time goes on.

Telecom

The CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

CHAOS has bought a used 1030 modem and was given a second 1030 in need of repair. One (and hopelully soon, the other) will be available on a check-out basis for members who would like to sample the telecommmunication world before buying one for themselves. As inexpensive as a 1030 or a XM301 modem is, and as exciting and beneficail as calling BBS systems can be, I expect most samplers to become buyers! Ask me at the meetings or by phone to sign up for your turn to try these units on your 8-bit ATARI. If an offer of a RS-232 type modem by Gary Ferris works out, we will be able to soon extend this offer to our ST users, too (300 baud is fine to try it out!)

Last month I (jokingly I think) mentioned that we needed to get a hard drive for the BBS to keep up with the demand for space...

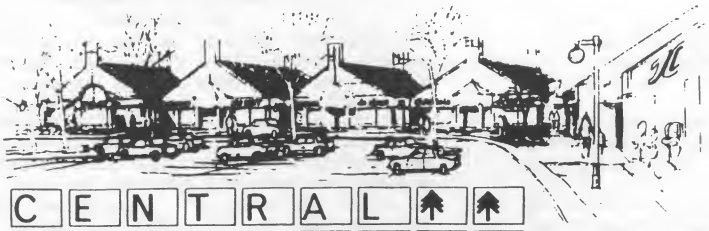
Now, all of a sudden it looks like that's what will happen! ICD Corp has made it economical to add a hard drive to an ATARI 8-bit system through the use of their MIO box. It interfaces a somewhat standard controller and hard drive for about $150... the controller and drive run as cheaply as $250 a set for a small (5 meg) drive. Considering that whole package is less than the price of three 1050 drives but has the storage space of 30 (!!) plus much faster and more reliable access... it's realistic at last.

Members polled at the last ST and 8-bit meetings approved the move. We expect to make back roughly $200 through the sale of equipment that the MIO and hard drive will replace.

The added space will enable us to give a better variety of 8-bit software, and finally enough room for more than the couple ST files we have had available. Expect the CHAOS BBS to be running faster and bigger sometime in January if all goes well... the MIO boxes are back ordered 6-8 weeks already! Also plan to see many changes and additions to the features of the CHAOS BBS software as the winter months forces me to stay indoors more.

In the meantime, enjoy our current system with more than 100 files online at all times, plus great message bases and the on-line weekly ZMAGAZINE. It's all at 300 or 1200 baud, (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day!

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!



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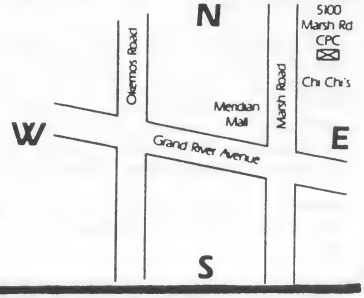

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Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
by John Baker

SHOCK!! That's right, I'm still in shock. Today I found out that people actually read some of the stuff I write in my newsletter articles. That's scary! These individuals are definitely not your run of the mill newsletter readers. These are my kinda people.

OK, listen up CHAOS members. As a little bonus for Christmas (and for reading my column) I'm throwin a "Boss is outa town sale". While Leo is gone on his Tahiti vacation, I'm blowin the lid off of the library! Half price library disks!! You read it right. Any two disks in our regular library for the price of one! "How can he do this?", I hear you asking yourselves. Hey, I'm just a softy, and besides Leo will never know about it. Also we will have the Christmas AMS music disk & demo disk.

Now for the fine print: In order to take advantage of my generous offer, you must fill out a library order sheet when you arrive at the meeting. Get out your library listing sheet RIGHT NOW and mark down your choices so you will know what you want to order when you get there. There will be a partial print-out of some of the new disks that are now being added to the library, and these too can be had at the half price offer. Remember, Disk of the Month disks and Bonus Disks are not regular library disks. Those remain at the regular $5.00 price.

As for other library news, the library disk exchanges with other clubs are going well. Always looking for clubs to exchange software with, so send me your listing and lets get down to some serious trading. Our new listing should be out in January and we should break the 200 mark. That number does not include our complete archive of Analog and Antic disks.

We now have the newest, most feature filled version of Textpro available to date (1.2a). Extremely easy to use, well documented and able to handle all the needs of most people desiring a word processor.

The terminal software "Express" series is being updated by the author. Express 850 is the first to be completed and we have that available now. The others will soon follow. Make sure you see us to get a good terminal program to use with that new modem on your Christmas list.

Make sure also that you use that new modem to take advantage of the soon to be upgraded CHAOS BBS. Our new hard disk capacity will allow us to have much more room for files, features, and goodies, allowing you to get the most out of your on line time.

Hardware/software upgrade kits for your XL/XE machines, Disk of the Month subscriptions, and CHAOS memberships, are great gift suggestions (even if you give them to yourself). Hope this gives you food for thought.

Thanks for your enthusiastic support of the CHAOS library and BBS. Have a safe and happy holiday season.

VIEWPOINT

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE
By John Nagy (CHAOS)

It was brought to my attention the other day that NEWS is sometimes what DOESN'T happen.

In recent issues if MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, we have congratulated PRO VIDEO, formerly of the MERIDIAN MALL in Okemos, on their name change and move into CENTRAL PARK PLACE. We welcomed Lansing's COMPUTER CONSIGNMENTS to the ATARI world and were pleased to have them show interest in us. We even commented on SEARS and TOYS 'R US and their renewed support (such as it is) for the ATARI computers.

And while all this IS news, and deserves mention, another area dealer has simply continued to do what he has for years now: support ATARI as his main and continuing product. I am talking about CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS at 1716 East Michigan in Lansing. Barry Griffin founded CASTLE and started promoting ATARI back when it was fashionable the FIRST time, and kept it up right through the pits of the last 2 years.

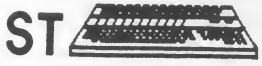
Barry has probably seen and operated more ATARI software for both the 8-bit and the ST line than you or I have ever heard mentioned. His staff is made up of regular ATARI users, who can tell you from personal experience what can and can't be done on an ATARI- and HOW to do it. That's a resource you simply can't duplicate by MAIL-ORDER.

Operating from a converted home on Michigan Avenue, Castle has a daily parade of customers of all descriptions, owners with questions and ATARI junkies that just like to soak up and spread ATARI information. The phone rings constantly and most calls start with the same words: "How can get my ATARI to..." The callers know that they are likely to have asked at the right place.

Don't take this article as an advertisement- it's not. It's NEWS. It's just that the headline "CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS FAILS TO DROP ATARI" should have been run about a year ago... but we missed it and need to make up for it. And while it's certainly true that some other dealers are now supporting the ATARI with competent staffs and good selections, we already told you that in the last issues.

Oh, a few words about supporting local dealers: DO IT. They support you, your machine, and this magazine (with advertising). They regularly try to help you solve your problems EVEN when you buy your hardare and software MAIL ORDER. That's beyond the call of duty, so don't ask for it often! You can't complain that nobody local handles enough ATARI stuff when you turn around and buy it out of magazines to try to save a couple more percent. After shipping, long distance calls, the wait, the worry about getting a DEAD-ON-ARRIVAL item and shipping it back (more expense and waiting)... how much do you save? Buying from a local dealer is like buying insurance. You can often do without it, but when you need it, BOY do you wish you had it. Besides, when was the last time someone at a mail order place offered to take the time to show you why a particular product was NOT going to work out for you? It happens all the time at local dealers, and YOU save a bundle on a package you would have wasted money on.

Barry is currently remodeling his storefront with a tri-level deck, but says that CASTLE will be moving before the end of 1987 to a brand new building closer to downtown Lansing. And he will continue to sell what he knows to be the highest value computer anywhere- the ATARI.



NOVEMBER ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the second Saturday of each month. At the November meeting 15 people attended, most of them experienced ST owners. A quick show of hands showed that all but 3 attendees owned ST's, all ST owners but 1 were CHAOS members, and over half of the attendees owned modems.

Initial discussion covered this publication, the recent Fall computer show, and the CHAOS bulletin board. Using the CHAOS bulletin board is encouraged, and it can be used to help plan for ST meetings. It's also the best way to submit articles. One member actually owns a 1040 that was purchased locally! Maybe the availability of the 1040 is finally becoming better. Discussion of this led to the question of 520 upgrades. Kits that use a card, as opposed to the home-made "piggybacking" of the memory chips, are in the $170 to $200 range. This is close to the difference in price between a new 520 and a new 1040. So it seems that a new user would be better off going straight to a 1040 rather than getting a 520 and planning to update later. Earlier questions about possible heat problems with the 1040 (internal power supply and double sided disk drive) brought the response that this is not a problem.

Another interesting topic was C compilers. One member has nothing but praise for the Megamax C compiler. I reported that the Alcyon C compiler is somewhat difficult to use. No one present had used the GST C compiler extensively, and the Lattice C compiler may not be available yet. It was pointed out that comparisons of these compilers have been done extensively in the major magazines that cover Atari computers.

This led to some guessing about where these magazines are headed (specifically, ANALOG, ANTIC, and COMPUTE). ANALOG has just recently decided to publish 2 magazines, 1 for the 8 bit Atari and 1 for the 16 bit machine. ANTIC has the quarterly START, and may also be splitting its coverage. COMPUTE has a separate 6 months a year ST issue. Once again, there are some difficult choices to be made on what magazines meet an individual's needs (and apparently hard choices for the magazines, on what to present).

Later, the group broke up into small discussions, and some quick demos on the ST. Jeff Wells showed RED ALERT, a particularly violent game about nuclear war (but with excellent graphics). Mark Smathers again answered several questions about specific First Word problems, and also demoed several routines from the CHAOS ST public domain library, and passed out a listing of the files on the library disk. Perhaps in future meetings it will be best to begin the meeting with a demonstration of a library disk, rather that waiting for the end of the meeting.

I'll close with a correction: Last month, when I covered Mark Smathers' methods of creating desk tops, I suggested putting First Word in an AUTO folder. This will not work, because programs in AUTO folders are executed before GEM takes over, and First Word runs under GEM. What Mark does on his First Word disks is to have a program in the AUTO folder that copies First Word to the ram disk automatically. Then, with the desktop organized, it's a simple matter to double click on First Word to execute it quickly from the ram disk.

ChriSTmas meeting in December, laST meeting of the year.

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

C.H.A.O.S. NOVEMBER 8-BIT MINUTES
By: Gary Ferris

Attendance was very good at Novembers meeting and it was good to see some old faces that have been missing since spring.

The opening discussion centered on news from the Comdex show in Las Vegas and what Atari and Atari supporters had shown.

Also discussed was a proposed upgrade of the CHAOS BBS to an ICD MIO box and hard drive. The upgrade would triple present storage, which would make it feasable to have ST downloads online on a regular basis. With the sale of the replaced equipment, the upgrade could be done at a minimal cost.

The main feature of November was a demo and discussion of several of the Word Processors available for the 8-bit machines. A couple of planned demos had to be canceled as time ran short. These will be demoed in the next couple of months.

John Nagy put together another top-notch disk of the month (mostly games this month).

December is a special month for most people and so it is with CHAOS. For all the members who attend in December, there will be some very special gifts. There also will be free punch and cookies. There can never be too much though so feel free to bring along other holiday treats.

The balance in the treasury as of November 19, 1986 is $1149.76.

Gary Ferris
Sec/Treas

OTHER LANSING AREA COMPUTER CLUBS

CLUB	COMPUTER	CONTACT	PHONE #
Apple LUG	Apple	Gary Martin	394-0115
CCUG	Color Comp	Dale Knepper	626-6917
CMARC	Ama.Radio	Bill Hineman	323-2914
COMP KLUB	Texas Ins.	John Hayes	882-7860
DECUS	DEC	C.M. Watson	483-1111
DRUG	DEC Rainbow	Jeff Weihl	349-6967
Epson Users	Epson	Ted Bozarth	332-3710
LACC	Commodore	Jae Walker	351-7061
LAMALUG	Mac/Lisa	Chas Winters	787-5731
M3G	All	Warren Wolfe	337-7672
UPCO	IBM/Comp.	Skip Osterhus	321-3425

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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

VIEWPOINT

Presidential Mumblings for December 1986
by Jim Steele

Greetings, all! As I write this month's column Thanksgiving has yet to arrive. But the demands of deadlines in the publishing game mean that you won't be reading it until the first part of December. So I hope in advance that you all had a good one.

The minutes department.

November was supposed to be our swap meet. I guess some people had some items for sale, but not very many. Judging by the response to this event I guess we won't schedule another until there's enough people asking for it. As always, If you have anything to sell or swap, feel free to bring it along to the meetings. There's plenty of time during the Library dealings before the "official" meeting.

Speaking of the Library, Jerry Cross our keeper of the new 8-bit disks was unable to attend the November meeting. Something about being snowed in in Grand Rapids. The November additions as well as the new disks for December should be available at the December meeting. Jerry should be back from exile to Grand Rapids by Thanksgiving.

We've got some special events planned for our December meeting. Jerry's got ahold of some Atari promotional items, mugs, hats and such. Come on out and win a door prize.

The end of an era? department.

I was quite amazed to see those words in the Detroit News last week. Seems one of the suburban computer retailers feels that the time of the 8-bit Atari's is past. Is he right? The same ideas have been the subject of a long running message thread on Compuserve. It appears most of the developers feel there's no profit in Atari software..

A good many feel that piracy is the problem. Not to say that Atarians pirate any more than users of other brands. But the Atari market is smaller than those other markets, so the effect is greater.

Another idea expressed was that of "market saturation". Say someone indends to write software for the 8 bitters, what will he write? Games? It better be pretty good, Atari already has some of the best. Word Processing? There's Paperclip and in the Public Domain, Textpro and speedscript. Telecommunications? I can't see anything beating the PD "Express" series.

I'm not worried. There is a large enough base of existing software for the Atari to make it a usefull machine even if all of the commercial developers dropped it entirely. Back in the early days of micros, people wrote their own software, I guess it can still happen.

The real exciting area for the 8 bitters is hardware. Atari showed it's 1200 baud modem and 80 column display at the recent Comdex show. The handy thing about the modem is that it comes with both SIO interface and RS232 interface. It will run on an 8-bit machine without an 850 or other adapter and will also run on an ST if you "move up". ICD's MIO board is also shipping. I've flammed about that little jem enough in the past, so I guess you all know about it. Jerry plans to bring his MIO in to the December meeting, if you'd like to check it out.

Well, that's about it for this month's ravings. See you all at the December meeting, if not, have a great holiday season.

-Jim

Disk Library ST

GAG ST LIBRARY NOTES
by Gil Merciez

The Christmas season is upon us for another year. The GAG ST library is growing by leaps and bounds. With the new disks coming in December the library will have more than 30 disks of public domain software. The library is approaching the 10 megabyte mark preparing to enter 1987. The holes are beginning to fill up fast as better PD software emerges to plug the gaps in different categories.

December will find a brand new picture disk, Volume 5, chock full of computer art from across the country. A couple of miscellaneous disks will offer a little bit for everyone. For the entertainment minded, a couple of games offers you a chance to to sharpen your strategic skills. Look for DALEK.PRG and

OGRE.TTP. Ogre is a public domain non graphic adaptation of the popular board game of the same name. Origin Systems is readying a commercial graphics oriented adaptation for release in the near future. The public domain version in the library will allow you to get a head start on the strategy as you take your super tank into battle.

In the crowded text formatting / word processing arena a couple of new additions are available. PROFF is a text formatter with roots in the mainframe world. It is a sophisticated text formatter and is accompanied by a 70K+ doc file that thoroughly explains the command structure although it is not a model of easily understood documentation. The third version of a word processor desk accessory is also available. With this revision, NEWWORD.ACC has taken another step toward becoming a full featured word processor. Complete documentation is included as well as online help. NEWWORD is beginning to look better and better.

For the telecommunicators, a GEM based Kermit program will allow you to explore the ins and outs of this universal protocol. A folder containing the approved version of a clipboard implentation will also appear in December. This folder contains sample programs and source code for a method of transferring data, pictures, text, etc. between applications. Commercial applications should soon be appearing that utilize the clipboard feature.

As a special Christmas present from GAG, all ST library disks will be sold for $3 at the December meeting only. This is your chance to stock up on some of the older GAG disks and round out your collection of public domain software. The disks can make perfect Christmas presents to all of your ST friends. (You will notice how I bury this announcement in the middle of the article. With a little luck and the crush of Christmas mail you may not even receive this newsletter by the meeting date. I'm a Scrooge at heart!)

As attention turns to 1987, there are numerous projects I have been thinking about for the library. Beginning either January or February I will be offering Clip Art disks for your graphic pleasure. These disks will contain a wide variety of interesting art work in numerous formats so that they can be used in as wide a variety of applications as possible. There are several full featured desktop publishing packages on the near horizon. In addition, by using a combination of several of the commercial graphic programs and some public domain utilities it is possible to port most pictures, fonts, blocks, text, etc. from one format to another. This area will become a hotbed of activity in the coming year.

Now that Atari has released their CPM emulator look for useful public domain CPM applications, utilities, and other programs to appear in the GAG library during 1987 already ported to 3 1/2 inch CPM formatted disks and tested for compatability with the ST. With the release of the Magic Sac MacIntosh emulator public domain MacIntosh software will appear in the GAG library if there is any demand. The same holds true for IBM software. I bet you didn't think that when you purchased your ST you would someday be faced with the opportunity of learning about at least 3 different operating systems as well as TOS. You may never come up for air.

I'm still searching for a player program for Music Studio files that will play songs without having to load in picture files. I can't understand why some enterprising hacker hasn't come up with one that will present one simple graphic screen and drive both the internal ST sound chip and the MIDI port. I may just resort to a disk of Music Studio files as a hackers delight. I have collected over a 100 files configured for various synthesizers.

If you have any interesting ideas, comments, or suggestions about where to take the library, make your feelings known to me. Until then have a Merry Christmas!

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Librarian's Column
by Jerry Cross

Merry Christmas!! Don't you just love this time of year, with the Christmas music and happy people? And all of this snow and crowded shopping centers? And the pushy salesmen and overstuffed Santa's? Bah, Humbug!

Well, there's always the club disks. I haven't finished putting together the December disks yet because of other commitments to my job. but thanks to some last minute trading with the SPACE group in Seatle, I have some interesting stuff this month.

First, I'm sorry I missed the last meeting. The weather was pretty bad and I just couldn't make it. But I did manage to attend a local Atari club meeting up the road, so I got my computer junkie fix in last month.

Now on to business. Remember that revised TEXTPRO documentation I promised? Well, this month I have a revised revision of last months revised docs that covered the revisions to TEXTPRO ver 1 (did I lose anyone?). After some begging with John Baker, the CHAOS librarian, I received a completely re-written version of the whole TEXTPRO disk. This disk comes directly from the author of TEXTPRO and cleans up much of the stuff that I included in our Version. If you already have a copy, bring in your old disk and I'll trade it for no cost. If you haven't picked up a copy, why not? This is probably the best public domain program ever written for the Atari!

Also this month, there is a 2-disk SUPER-QUIZ program. Side one contains the program itself, and the other 3 sides contain

data (questions/answers). The questions cover such catagories as sports, history, entertainment, and other general topics. You trivia lovers will love this program.

Also this month is a public domain version of Basic XL. I haven't had the time to study this disks yet, but from what I have been reading about it, it's extremely popular and is fully compatable with Atari basic. The disk comes with plenty of docs and sample programs.

SPACE also sent along several other disks full of programs, so there should also be a games disks and utilities disk this month. I'll have more information on those at the meeting.

That's about all for this month. Don't forget to attend the next meeting. We will have lots of door prizes to give away, and I promise to show up with my MIO this month too!

Finally, the FACTS bbs is finally back on-line. After waiting weeks to get the hard drive repaired, it's back and waiting for your uploads! I still have lots of work to do on it. Most of the files were lost and must be done over again, not to mention copying all the programs back into the download section. The number is (313)736-3920, and it's open 24 hours, 300/1200 baud.

Next Meetings:

December 10,1986	6:30pm Holiday meeting!
January 14,1987	6:30pm regular meeting
January 24,1987	9:30am Saturday session
February 11,1987	6:30pm regular meeting.
February 28,1987	9:30am Saturday session

About Genesee Atari Group

Jim Steele	President
Gil Merciez	Vice President & ST librarian
Matt Howe	Vice President (8)
Jerry Cross	8-bit disk librarian
Jim Tuma	8-bit disk librarian
Nick Klak	Print librarian

Mailing address:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, located at
2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint,MI.
Meetings begin at 6:30pm. We also have a Saturday morning session for second-shifters. This group meets on the fourth Saturday on the month, during the school year. Come on out and say "G'day"

G.A.G. membership dues are $10 per year. Membership benefits include our newsletter (part of this publication) and access to our pd disk and print libraries. If you choose to join to mail, checks should be made payable to Jim Steele.

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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

December 13th at 2:00 pm.
January 10th at 2:00 pm.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8 bits and the ST's, and full access to the club library of software. Currently our 8 bit library includes approximately 80 disks and the ST library includes approximately 20 disks. In addition, TAG purchases disk subscriptions to ANALOG, Antic, and STart. We regularly purchase software to demo, and then raffle off the software to club members. Support your club, renew now! If you know anyone that might be interested, encourage them to join!

***** EXPIRATION NOTICE *****

Our new club magazine, the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, will not be sent to you once you have let your membership lapse for more than three months! This is due to the cost of this magazine. Look at your mailing label - on it you will find your expiration date. You will receive a maximum of three more issues before we cancel your magazine. Please renew NOW, if you need to do so!!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

TAG is once again having it's annual Christmas Swap'N'Shop bash! Gather up all of your old software and/or hardware and bring it to the December meeting. Make sure to bring plenty of cash, too, because there might be some items there that attract your attention. To keep the Christmas spirit, we'll have a Casio CZ-101 synthesizer connected to an ST and playing Christmas music. While the music plays, the ST will also display Christmas pictures in a slide show format! The program doing all of these great things is a public domain demo called Alite. Other music will also be demoed on the CZ-101.

Anyone wishing to participate in the TAG Gift Exchange is required to bring a gift (keep it under $5.00) to place on the pile. To keep things simple - Guys, bring guy gifts, and Girls, bring girl gifts (I know it sounds corny... Well Exxxcuuuuuse MEEE!).. Even simpler, bring computer gifts, they're great for everyone!

REMEMBER!! Everyone should bring a dish to pass (cookies, cake, etc.). I'll bring the coffee pot to supply hot water, and some DECAFFEINATED coffee.

January's meeting will focus on databases. For the ST we'll have VIP (GEM version?) and Zoomracks, and for the 8 bits we'll have Synfile and HomeFind (from HomePak).

E B V

8-Bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings.....130XE
Margaret Schmidt...Disk Drive
Gerald Reno.....Monitor

ST Equipment Volunteers:

LeRoy Valley.....Casio CZ-101
.....1040
Frank Serreseque...Stereo
Lance Middleton.....Monitor

ST

ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley

P-K4, P-K4, P-Q4, PxP...
"Would you please stop kibitzing!!!"
"Checkmate in three moves"...
"Checkmate !"...

By now, most of you can probably guess what my column is about this month. For those few uninitiated of you however, the answer is --- CHESS! That's right, chess has finally arrived for the ST, and OH has it ever arrived! I'm still dazed by my latest loss. CHESS, by Psion Ltd., is simply the best computer chess game I've ever played.

Just to give you some point of reference, I am NOT a beginner. I've been playing chess for 13 years and my USCF rating (even if it is 2 years old) is 1856. I've played Chess 7.0 and Sargon III on the Atari 8 bits and numerous other dedicated chess machines (Fidelity, GGM) and nothing compares with this offering by Psion. Psion claims that this program won the 1986 World Microcomputer Chess Championships, and I believe it. It's the first machine that beats me consistently at tournament level (at times even decimates me). Anyway, enough of that, you get the idea. It does play a strong game. Now let me tell you about the features it has.

When first booted, you are greeted by an impressive 3 dimensional display of a chess board and pieces. By moving the mouse to the top of the screen, you can select a number of options from a menu that only appears when the mouse is actually at the top of the screen. During normal play, the menu is not visible, and therefore will not distract you. Movement is as simple as pointing at the piece and clicking, then moving to the square you want and clicking again. (Don't worry, the computer will not let you make an illegal move.)

There are seven main menus at the top of the screen: PSION, GAMES, PLAYERS, LEVELS, DISPLAY, MOVES, and FEATURES. Under the PSION menu you have three choices: HELP, LANGUAGE, and QUIT. The manual included is only four pages long (the English version), but HELP describes every option in great detail. LANGUAGE allows you to select any of six languages to display all of the options in: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Swedish. I am NOT going to explain the QUIT option to you!

GAMES has 4 selections: NEW GAME, to start a new game at any time, OPEN GAME, to load a previously saved game, SAVE GAME, to save the current game, and MASTER GAMES, to access any of the 150 Master games stored on disk. One note about NEW GAME. When you select it, the pieces aren't merely placed back on the board. Each piece left on the board glides back to it's home square. Nice touch.

The PLAYERS option allows you to select PLAYER vs ST, PLAYER vs PLAYER, and ST vs ST. In the case of PLAYER vs PLAYER, Psion Chess will monitor each players moves and all options are available to each player (such as Analysis, Hint, and Take Back).

LEVELS gives you a full range of levels to choose from. Timed levels include: Novice (immediate response), 2 sec., 4 sec., 6 sec., 15 sec., 30 sec., 45 sec., 1 min., 1.5 min., 2 min., 3 min., 4 min, Equal (Chess will take as much time as you do), and Infinite (Chess will search until it has found it's best move). All times are the average time per move. In addition to these levels, there is also a Handicap option. While you are considering your move, Chess continues to "think" about it's next move. Handicap turns Chess's ability to think off while it's your turn. The last goodie under this option is MATE IN. Using this option allows Chess to find up to a checkmate in 8. Unlike most computer chess games, Chess plays very well even at the lower levels. Setting it as low as 6 seconds per move still yields a challenging game.

For those of you who think that the 3D board looks a little cluttered (or unconventional), DISPLAY offers a 2D BOARD option. Using 2D BOARD yields a reduced size flat 2D chess board, where movement is the same as on the 3D board. Once 2D is selected, the choice changes to 3D BOARD. You can switch between the boards as often as you like during the course of the game. The nice thing about the 2D BOARD version is that you have a second window opened next to the chess board that shows a record of all moves by both you and Chess. The record (and the board!) can be printed out. This move record is always carried internally whether you're in 2D or 3D. Other options under DISPLAY include HIDE MOVE RECORD, which closes the move record window (it can be retrieved at any time), SHOW ANALYSIS, which, when enabled, will show the current expected line of moves and the relative advantage held by either side, and finally INVERT BOARD, which simply changes the colors of the pieces (you still play your pieces, they're just black instead of white, or vice versa).

The MOVES menu allows you to get a HINT, TAKE BACK a move (or moves), CHANGE SIDES so that you're playing Chess's pieces and vice versa, OFFER DRAW, REPLAY (used on a loaded game or on a master game to replay the game), NEXT BEST which tells Chess to take the next best move (this helps when looking for multiple mates), MOVE NOW which forces Chess to move NOW, and BEST SO FAR which forces Chess to use the best move that it's found.

The final menu, FEATURES, allows you to SET UP the board (for mate problems or analysis of games), ENABLE RESIGN to allow Chess to resign if the situation becomes hopeless, STOP CLOCKS (yes Chess does keep time for both of you), RESET CLOCKS back to 0, turn the SOUND OFF, PRINT MOVES to print the entire move record (very nice!), and PRINT BOARD (even nicer!).

If it seems like this column is long winded, you're right. But this program is worth it! Unlike many programs which play 'I'll wait till he makes a mistake and then get him' chess, Chess plays a very aggressive game. The opening game is complete and endgame play is devastating. For $49.95, you can't go wrong if you want a good game of chess. If you're looking for something to beat, then this might not be the program for you. Well, I've got to go now. This infernal machine just challenged me to a best out of five series. Until next month.

P-K4, P-K3 (What in the world?)...

RELICS TO RELISH
(Formerly called Minutes from the last meeting.)

The turn out for Michtron was, to say the least, disappointing. We had a total of about 20 people, and five of those were new faces . Most of the people who turned out were ST'ers. In all fairness, however, our newsletter didn't reach any of our members on time, so it may have slipped many peoples minds. If our club is going to pull off anything like this again, I'm going to have to see a LOT more support than I did this time.

The meeting was excellent, nonetheless. Kieth Reynolds from Michtron demoed many of their programs including Time Bandits, ST Pool (which turned out to be a pleasant surprise), Pinball Factory (Fantastic!), and many more. Many members had questions answered concerning programs that they already had, and we got to see several new programs. Michtron has a new program available called Trivia Challenge, and it looks pretty good. The sports section is extremely tough, though, because the program was made in England and most of the questions are about Cricket and Rugby.

The talk of the meeting was a demo of a currently unreleased program called Karate Kid II. The graphics on the program are up to the standards of Time Bandits and animation is smooth. Nice touches have been added such as the figure scratching his head as he gets up off of the floor after a particularly nasty blow. Background scenery is constantly changing, and the intermission screens are excellent. The first intermission has the old man trying to catch a fly with his chopsticks. As the fly flys around, the eyes follow it! The second intermission has Daniel trying to break blocks of ice. That's as far as we got. Kieth said the program should be released around Christmas time. This is one that I've got to have!

Many members took advantage of the fact that Kieth had goodies to sell (including me) and we thank him for taking the time to come up and show off his products.

It was mentioned that with Christmas coming up, we should get out flyers describing our club and the services we provide. Many houses may be getting Atari's for Christmas, and most of them won't know what to do with them once they get them. If you've got any ideas, bring them to the December meeting! Make something up on Print Shop or by hand. Anything is worth considering! We need volunteers to post flyers in their home towns.

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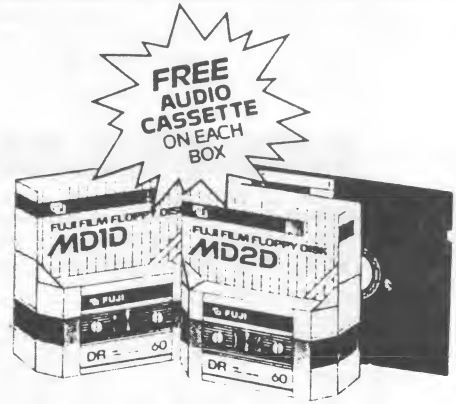

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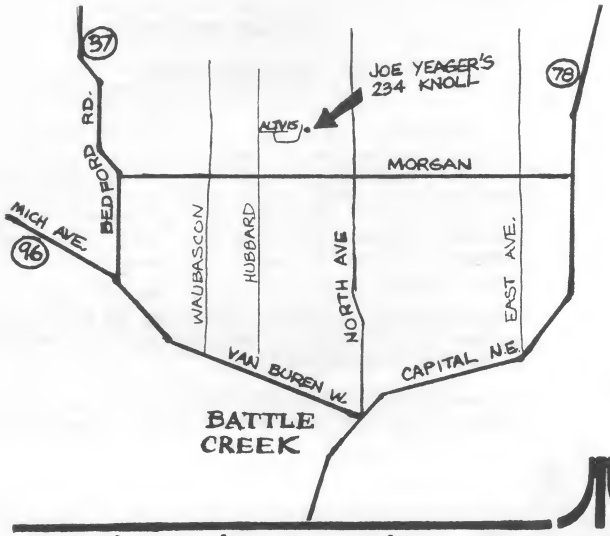
BATTLE CREEK ATARI USERS' GROUP

DECEMBER MEETING
by Chuck Steele

The Anual Christmas Meeting/Party will be at Joe Yeagers house, Thursday December 18 at 7:00 PM. See map for directions. We plan to have alot of things for you to see. Compusoft as agreed to let us demo a half dozen or so new releases. Joe will have her ST set up and running with some new neat stuff. Wait till you see Silent Service run on her ST. As last year we will have Christmas goodies. We will have a demo of the Holiday Disk of the month. Don't miss out on this. Christmas goodies also mean things to munch on. So your mouth can be as full as your disk drive!!

We hope each one of you will be able to be at Joe's house for this special meeting. We invite you to bring your spouse and or friends. This should be a fun meeting for all, so hope to see you there.



Disk Library

LIBRARIANS CORNER
by Chuck Steele

As many of you know I have been without a Disk drive since September, and we all know that our computers are all but useless without them. So Joe Yeager has come to my rescue and lend me her disk drive. As a result your Disk Librarian is back on the job. Thanks Joe!!

We are planing on a special holiday Disk of the Month to make up for not having a Sept. or Oct. Disk of the Month. There will be plenty of new things on the December Disk so come to the meeting and get your Disk. Hope to see you there!

BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
MEMBERSHIP:	
Thomas Siemietkowski	963-4475
LIBRARIAN:	
SECRETARY:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
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Editor-Todd Harris	781-5963
Production-Dan Egan	962-2549
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Richie Frye	965-0480

Did you forget to hold OPTION down when you booted, and now don't want to find a disk with DOS and DUP on it? From BASIC, type:
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CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Editor	Wolfgang Mueller	789-8917
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-4599

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Harold LaRue

If you did not attend last month's meeting you may be interested in how the election went. All but two officers accepted the nomination to retain their positions. I replaced Wolfgang Mueller as President and Joseph Cripps replaced Rick Sullivan as Secretary. In addition, I would like to mention that Brent Fisher is our new Hardware Coordinator and welcome a new member, William Locke.

As you may know, we are planning a Computer Faire at Westwood Mall in February. We are still lacking a couple of systems. If you would like to donate your system PLEASE contact me or another officer. If you can't donate a system how about some time. We need people to man the displays.

I hope to see better attendance this month than in the past.

See you at the meeting...

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Scott Boland

It's November and time for another treasury report. As of the November meeting the club treasury had $82.14 in petty cash and $263.04 in the account. Since then we paid out $31.00 for the newsletter and $10.00 for a new disk holder for the club software library. This leaves our balance at $41.14 in petty cash and $263.04 in the account.

I would like to welcome Bill Locke as the newest member to our club. I am sure you will find it a rewarding experience.

On the subject of memberships, I have a few words concerning membership dues. Please check

your mailing label of the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine for your current expiration date. It is located on the upper right corner of the label. Any member whose dues expire will receive one more newsletter. After that, in order to receive any further mailings, your dues must be paid up. The club needs your support and no one should miss out on the best Atari newsletter that I know of, so please keep your dues current. Thank you.

Disk Library

CACE LIBRARY

by Bob Kingsbury
(517) 789-7533

Deadlines, don't you just hate them. It seems like you never have time to get things done when you have a time limit. The past month has disappeared faster than the one before. Another thing that has just disappeared is an updated list of your club library. The list that was pasted out at the last meeting is now outdated. I will have a new list at Decembers meeting. For December you might want to check out the CHRISTMAS disk.

C.A.C.E. is in the process of horse trading with other groups and individuals in and out of the state to build the library. If you have any PD software you would like to share with your club bring it to the next meeting. Bring a full disk and trade for one in the library. Also anyone reading this can send a S.A.S.E.(business size please) and we will send you a list and cost to send you disks from C.A.C.E. .

There are a couple of people who need a pat on the back for their donations to the library this past month. These donations were from Joe Garner and John Charles.

December will be Harold LaRue's first meeting as the new PRES.. Lets all be there to see what he has in mind for the next year. We also need help to organize February's computer show at Westwood Mall.

One more thing, if you call in advance (789-7533 my new number) to the meeting I will bring a copy of the disk you need. This will save copy time at the meeting.

See you Dec. 14th, and if you see Scott B. before then, ask him where the keys are.

Editor's Note

Editors Notes

by Wolfgang Mueller

Having not accepted the nomination, it should be quite obvious that I am no longer the President. I will give my full support to Harold LaRue, our new President, and I will continue to edit and compile this newsletter to the best of my ability. Not having a secretary at the last meeting there will not be a report of minutes in this issue, but our newly elected secretary promises to keep us well informed, if we have to miss a meeting. (Which we Hope Never happens)

I have personally decided to sell all of my Atari equipment, but don't get too happy yet, because I am going to buy an ST. I haven't made up my mind whether I should get a 520 or a 1040, maybe some advice would be in order.

Back to 8 Bits, at this writing, I haven't been informed of what software will be demo'ed at the next meeting. But one of our members is a very avid user of SynCalc 130, an excellent spread sheet designed for the extra RAM in the 130XE. He tells me that he will demo it, but is not yet sure if it will be this month.

Answers to the C.A.C.E. PUZZLER (next page):

ANTIC, MONITOR, CHIP, VARIABLE, SYSTEM,
DIRECTORY, POKEY, SERIAL, PROTOCOL, PARALLEL,
CHARACTER, CONNECTOR, MODEM, PLOTTER, LANGUAGE,
PRINTER, MACRO, EPROM, JOYSTICK, SCROLL.

"Friendly no, but it *is* user tolerant."

C.A.C.E. PUZZLER OF THE MONTH
by Millie Mueller

I decided that last month's puzzler was too easy, so this will be a word search. See how many computer type words you can find. There are 20 in all! Remember that I will gladly print any puzzle submitted to the editor.

The answers are on the previous page- DON'T PEEK!. GOOD LUCK! -Millie

K D I R E C T O R Y O T O R P J L

S C H R P O S C R O L L W A O O A

P Y I M R P R O T O C O L Y S Y L

U D S O C H I N W D M O R P E S A

D L C N H A A N R P Z N L O Z T N

V A R I A B L E B E V O R K M I G

S I V T M F G C A N T I C E E C U

Y R K O Y A W T D T Y C Z Y D K A

S E O R U D C O E H M H A V O H R

T S I G V F O R C A M L R R M Z P

E T N L R I B B O M V E V M A C I

M A A Z G P R I N T E R W O R H H

L E L L A R A P C H A R A C Z Y C

Industry Report

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ANTIC '86 WINTER COMDEX REPORT
BY DEWITT ROBBELOTH, ANTIC EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Atari Corp. set up its crowded COMDEX exhibit near the entrance to the main hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center. COMDEX, the international computer exposition run by The Interface Group, opened a five-day stay with 1,300 exhibitors and 50,000 "trade" folk attending.

Atari occupied a rectangular island measuring about 30 by 75 feet. In that area it crammed not only its own products but those of 65 selected third-party developers. Things got so crowded that some of Atari's exhibitors had to take turns using the display space at one of the 40 minibooths.

ATARI HARDWARE

Atari showed its new [but still unavailable- ED.] 1200 baud, Hayes-compatible modem, the SH212, and the new 80-column box [also unavailable], XEP80, for the XL/XE 8-bit computers ($79.95). The long-awaited [and still waiting] ST blitter chip was demonstrated running some sensational graphics. It is to be released early in 1987 as a $120 upgrade, piggybacking on new ROM chips.

On the software side, Atari showed and announced its word processor for the ST called Microsoft Write. This package, to be shipped late this year, is a direct port by Microsoft of its Macintosh Word, V. 1.05. It makes full use of type fonts, including proportionally-spaced fonts, and many special features pointing towards desktop publishing with a laser printer. Insiders expect Atari to offer an affordable laser printer in 1987. Microsoft Write will retail for $129.95 when it ships late this year.

Apparently Atari will be building up the software side of its business, according to an announcement by Sam Tramiel at Atari's party held this evening at Caesar's Palace. Among the programs offered will be a series of educational programs for junior high schoolers. These were designed by Arrakis Software of Canada and include 17 modules on algebra, trigomometry, geometry, statistics, biology and physics. Although other educational programs are available for the ST, few address the needs of this age group, who comprise about 60% of personal computer users, according to John Skruch.

CHRISTMAS SOFTWARE PROMO

Atari announced a cooperative ST software promotion to run through December. It has mailed coupons to ST dealers which will be given to the customer at time of purchase. Each company controls the discount, rebate or free merchandise offered by its coupon, with savings of 30-50% on a second title with any standard price purchase being typical. See you local dealers for more details.

Commenting on the promotion, Michael Katz, Atari Executive Vice President, said, "We feel this will serve as a great incentive to the consumer to purchase ST software and will help

our ST dealers generate profitable, new and continuing software sales."

Free bundled software with the purchase of an ST is a thing of the past, says Atari's new Director of Software Sales, Richard Frick. "Only ST BASIC will come with the computers now. 1st Word has been improved and will sell as a product called 1st Word Plus." He was demonstrating the ability of this word processor to incorporate graphics with text at the show.

Software and peripherals companies have climbed on the Atari bandwagon and showed new and revised products at Atari's pavilion at the autumn COMDEX.

One striking new application is the touch screen technology for the ST by the Video Touch Company of Springfield, Oregon. Demonstrating a real-life restaurant ordering program operated entirely by touch, this company shows how Atari STs can match and even improve on data-entry systems formerly costing much more.

The system uses standard ST hardware with monitors modified to include the touch screens. One ST running under the Micro RTX operating system from Beckemeyer Development Tools controls the other STs in the system. The user interface is completely graphic and requires no computer knowledge to operate. New employees learn how to use it in 20 minutes, according to the manager of the Mill Camp restaurant where the system was first installed.

Beckemeyer Development Tools also showed the Micro RTX kernel running with the company's MT C Shell ($129.95) which creates a multi-tasking, multi-user environment for many programs to operate simultaneously.

CAD & ANIMATION

Another impressive new program for the ST is Drafix-1, a full-featured, high-performance CAD package ported over from the IBM by Foresight Resources Corp. of Lawrence, Kansas. This program for professional architects, engineers, drafters and other designers actually runs faster on the ST, in some functions, than its counterpart on the IBM. It costs $249.95.

Aegis Development Inc. showed its Animator ST program that should be available before Christmas. This program can use any ST drawing as a background, for example NEOchrome or DEGAS, and overlay detailed cels to create an illusion of movement. The program does the tough work of creating intermediate steps. It will also change the shape of one object to the shape of another - say a fish to a dog - or make objects appear to move through color cycling, as in a waterfall or a waving flag. Retail price is $79.95.

ACCOUNTING

Execon Business Software of London, England, demonstrated its Accounting software, part of a larger integrated system for British business. The payables, receivables, ledger and forecasting module has been Americanized and will be available in January for $250. This will be followed by the Invoicing and Inventory modules which will sell for $150 each.

SBM is an accounts and inventory program from Newell Industries of Wylie, Texas. This program is available for the Atari 8-bit computers or the ST and sells for $99.95.

The incredible accounting software buy for the ST, however, remains DAC-Easy, a complete accounting package for business that costs $69.95. From DAC Software of Dallas, Texas.

VIDEO DIGITIZERS

MichTron's Video Digitizer Expert (by way of Pro-Technik of Germany) features 128 gray levels, resolution as high as 1024 X 512 pixels and NEOchrome and DEGAS compatability.

A new color video digitizing system for Digital Vision's Computereyes ($249.95) captures images in full color or monochrome from a VCR, video camera or video disk, automatically calibrating brightness, contrast and color balance.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Major desktop publishing products for the Atari ST pulled a great deal of focus at COMDEX.

From England, the Fleet Street Editor (about $150) has a complete disk of library graphics and is ideal for newsletters, sales bulletins, restaurant menus and circulars. The two Fleet Street Publisher packages for the ST let you produce multi-page documents with editable page layouts and more, in addition to those features offered at the Editor level. Publisher Level I will be available this spring, and Level II will be ready in the summer.

XLEnt Software's mouse-controlled and menu-driven TypeSetter Elite ($49.95) contains 23 built-in fonts and the ability to load custom fonts, and you can underline and outline text and change intensity, grab entire screens and print a full page, screen dump, free form, index cards, labels or Rolodex cards.

Coming soon for the ST is LaserType ($279) by Softlab, which takes full advantage of the Hewlett Packard LaserJet+ printer's font downloading and gives you smooth graphics and full typesetting capabilities. Select from 20 different screens and tones for column headings, backgrounds or graphic designing, and control 16 type styles and sizes.

Atari Technical

UP AND RUNNING
By John Nagy

Here are some tips on trying to get programs to work once you have downloaded them (from the CHAOS BBS or ANYWHERE). These hints will help even if you DIDN'T download the program from ANYWHERE, but are having troubles. Many times it is hard to tell what to do with a file, especially if it doesn't just "RUN".

>LISTed BASIC files, marked LISBAS in the file language field, will look like english BASIC program statements while downloading. These programs will NOT run as is. You must ENTER the program (using BASIC at a READY prompt) using this format:

ENTER"D:FILENAME.EXT"

Then RUN (or preferably SAVE it to disk first- use a DIFFERENT filename, so if anything goes wrong, you will not have lost your original file).

>A BASIC "tokenized" file (marked as SAVBAS sent with lots of codes and symbols) can be LOADed or RUN from BASIC. Example-

RUN"D:FILENAME.EXT"

>A machine code program (marked with an OBJ in the files and looking totally symbolic when downloading) must be run from DOS. Go to DOS, type "L" and enter the filename. This type of file can also be run from many binary type "loader" or "menu" programs, or can often be made to self-boot by renaming them AUTORUN.SYS.

>Text files can be viewed by going to DOS, type "C" (copy), then when prompted "from, to?" type the program name, a comma, and then E: to display it on the screen editor. Use control/1 to stop and restart the scroll, and be ready as it will go QUICKLY. Or instead of E: use P: to send the text to the printer.

Some programs NEED to be renamed before they will operate properly, or there may be multiple files required that call on each other. See the INDEX of files for details on each program whenever that's possible! There is OFTEN a documentation file also on-line that will provide needed information.

ERROR CODES ENCOUNTERED ON RUNS:

ERROR 21 - LISTed BASIC file or BINARY File attempted to be RUN or LOADed from BASIC. Use ENTER, or for BINARY files, go to DOS, then use "L", type (FILENAME) to run this file.

ERROR 136 - This is an "end of file" error that signifies that the file did not end where it was supposed to. This happens with BINARY programs that have had extra characters added to them by faulty XMODEM protocol. (HOMETERM, PROTERM, TERM1030 are examples of the problem terminals. EXPRESS, AMODEM, and MASTERM are ok, but can't correct a program that was uploaded by one of the culprits.) OFTEN you can load one of these damaged programs into a word processor and remove the repeated last characters that should never have been included, then re-save the file and try again. Best to load a few working programs into the word processor first to get an idea of how the end of the file NORMALLY looks. Good Luck.

ERROR 137 - You tried to ENTER a BINARY or Tokenised BASIC program. Use LOAD or RUN, or for BINARY, go to DOS and use "L".

ERROR 147 - Insufficient RAM. You are trying to run too big a program, or else have too many things loaded at once. Try a smaller DOS like DOS 2, or don't run some of your autobooting accessories.

ERROR 164 - File linkage problems. The file is no longer comtinuous on your disk- the links in the sectors are not pointing to the next part of the file, and you are "lost". Not much can be done. NOTICE: SOME programs will report a 164 error when they are really simply conflicting with an oversize DOS like SMARTDOS or MACHDOS. Try again using DOS 2 before you give up.

ERROR 170 - The drive can't find a file by the name you typed. Be sure you have spelled correctly, and don't leave off extenders.

BAD LOAD FILE - you will get this message from DOS if you try to use "L" for a non-binary file. Go to Basic ("B") and LOAD or RUN or ENTER the file.

LAST NOTES IF YOUR PROGRAM STILL WON'T RUN:

Check your file against the BBS file for length. Be sure you got all of it! An incomplete file MAY appear to be the full length, but a clue is a "DOUBLE READY" prompt appearing when you try to run the program in BASIC. This type problem is usually not recoverable, athough there are some utilities (like "REPAIR STATION") that can make the file listable and PERHAPS repaiable.

Some BINARY files require that BASIC not be present at the time of loading. Remove the cartridge (or hold OPTION down on XL's) when turning on the computer if you have problems running BINARY files.

On XL's and XE's, try a TRANSLATOR on problem programs. These are available in the library and occasionally on line, and install the "OLD 800" operating system over the XL/XE system. Typically on OLDER BINARY programs, this can make it work.

If you get a "NEED MEMSAVE TO RUN THIS PROGRAM" message from DOS when attempting to load a BINARY program, it MAY need to be renamed "AUTORUN.SYS" to boot in at powerup. This is a quirk, and occasionally, you will ACTUALLY need a "MEMSAVE" file on the disk for these to work. It's rare, but worth a try. DOS offers "CREATE MEMSAVE", so try it.

If none of these helps can make your program run, it may just be that we have a bad file at our end. Thats not the preferred situation, so leave a message for SYSOP on the message base and we will try to fix the problem and get back to you.

Review

MOUSE TRAP
Review By: Mitchell Wells

I know a lot of you CHAOS members came to the computer convention at the Clarion last month. It was a great time and there were some good buys. But something strange happened to me while I was there that should be of particular interest to ST users that I want to make you aware of. While at the CHAOS table speaking to some passers-by, a man came up to me and said, "Here, take this..." and so I did. He wanted me to review his new product, the MOUSE TRAP, a static trapping mouse pad, in this magazine, and so here it is.

Now, I haven't had my ST all that long, as most of you know. But I have had an APPLE and an IBM before, and so I was used to using a mouse...in fact, I liked using the mouse and that's one of the reasons I bought my ST. But a problem I've always had was having enough room on my computer table for proper maneuvering of the mouse. I had to pick up my mouse, after a fashion, and set it back down again in a different position so that I could move the cursor far enough. Bad pre-planning probably. But now that I have this mouse pad, I don't have that problem anymore. In fact, it takes less room to move the mouse than it did before because the MOUSE TRAP has a surface that creates enough friction against the roller on the mouse to make the mouse work properly. Which is good, but the best part about the MOUSE TRAP to some of you out there reading this might be its static trapping capabilities. If you've been plagued by a carpet that gives you a shock every time you touch something metal (or another human being) then beware...this WILL crash your computer after a time. (I've seen it happen...scrape your feet along your rug and then touch the keyboard if you want to fry some chips real neat.) There is a cable that comes with the MOUSE TRAP that hooks up to any ground that will keep this from happening, just touch the pad. You say, "WOW! I've got to have this."

Well, OK, then contact CRYSTAL COMPUTERS, INC., 2286 East Steel Road, St. Johns, MI 48879 or call (517) 224 - 7667. Don't ask me for the price, no one told me...but I'll bet it's a bargain.

The price of the above item is $49.95 - ED.

COMPUTER MUSIC

MIDITALK
By: Mitchell Wells

Last month I promised 8 bit users a bit of news... here it is. TNT Computers, a local group that manufactures the ACE 80 (80 Column) cartridge, is now making the MidifACE, a VERY inexpensive MIDI interface for the 8 bit computers. The MidifACE is completely compatible with all HYBRID ARTS software, and although it doesn't have the tape sync input and output, it's about half the price of the HYBRID ARTS Interface. If you were thinking about getting your feet wet with MIDI but didn't want to spend all that money, contact TNT Computers at (517) 394-2412 and talk with Mike Aldrich (who by the way is a club member, so support his business) about the MidifACE. I hope Mike goes national with this interface... this might generate some interest by other MIDI software manufacturers in the 8 bit Ataris. After all, you can go to Toys-R-Us and buy an 800XL for $85.00, put 256K RAM into it and still have spent less than 2/3rds of that which you'd have spent on a Commodore 64.

Now for new MIDI news for the ST... there are three new software products on the market for professionals using their ST for MIDI. They are:

Dr. T's KCS (Keyboard Controlled Sequencer). This product lists for $199.00 and does EVERYTHING. You can enter MIDI data either step time or real time, set up to 128 sequences of any length (limited by memory of which it will recognize up to 1 Meg.). It boasts a 48 track real time recorder, and the OPEN MODE of the product is the most flexible sequence editor of any on the market. Any sequence can be started at any MIDI clock within the piece, and ALL information of any MIDI event is totally editable. It also claims to read SMPTE and has a MIDI autolocater. One drawback with this product is that the documentation is difficult at best to understand. Was it a translation?

Steinberg Music Software has released the PRO 24 Sequencer in the U.S. after selling well in Europe. It's about as good a 24 track sequencer as is available and is supposed to be VERY user friendly. Just one problem with it. The price. $395.00? Come on, for $395.00, I expect it to have AI, which this program definitely does not. Now for $150.00...

Metatrak for the ST was just released and advertised in this months Keyboard magazine. There's not much information, but the price is right... $99.00. I'll be dropping them a check and I'll tell you more once I get the beastie in my hands.

One final comment. HYBRID ARTS has FINALLY released MIDITRACK ST for the price of $395.00. All this program is, is a glorified version of MIDITRACK III for the 8 bits, which you can get at a considerably reduced price. Come on, is this pricing some kind of joke?

Programs

Love At First Byte
by Mathew S. Howe (GAG)

OK, OK, so I'm not very productive. So I don't get my articles in on time every month. So what if I have been accused of being almost as wordy as Gil Merciez. At least I got an article in for this month. And what an article it is. This month we are going to add some guns to our helicopter! If you are new to this series (slow in coming as it is) there is a listing of the entire program in the article. If you have been following this meandering voyage into the world of P/M graphics you should have a copy of last month's program saved to disk. If so, then add the following lines:

```
97 IF STRIG(0)=0 THEN GOSUB 10100
5120 COLOR 1:PLOT 149,69:DRAWTO 149,60
5130 PLOT 67,55:DRAWTO 67,64
10100 POKE A+387+Y,3
10110 IF IMG=IMG2 THEN FOR Q=X TO 200:POKE
53252,Q
10120 IF IMG=IMG1 THEN FOR Q=X TO 12 STEP
-1:POKE 53252,Q
10130 C=PEEK(53248):IF C/2=INT(C/2) THEN POKE
53278,255:NEXT Q:GOTO 10200
10140 SOUND 3,200,10,10:POP
10150 FOR Q=1 TO 50:NEXT Q:SOUND 3,0,0,0
10200 POKE A+387+Y,0:RETURN
```

If you have done all this right then your listing should look like this:

```
10 REM SAVE "D:DEMO.BAS
20 GRAPHICS 7+16:A=PEEK(106)-24:POKE 106,A
30 POKE 54279,A:A=A*256
40 POKE 559,46:POKE 53277,3:POKE 53256,1
50 POKE 53248,50:X=50
60 FOR Q=A+512 TO A+640:POKE Q,0:NEXT Q
70 POKE 704,220:READ B:POKE 623,8
80 FOR Q=A+542 TO A+549:READ B:POKE Q,B:NEXT
Q:Y=30
85 GOSUB 5000:GOSUB 9000:IMG=IMG1
90 OLDY=Y:OLDX=X:ST=STICK(0)
91 IF ST=10 OR ST=14 OR ST=6 THEN IF OLDY>11
THEN Y=OLDY-1
92 IF ST=9 OR ST=13 OR ST=5 THEN IF OLDY<100
THEN Y=OLDY+1
93 IF ST=9 OR ST=10 OR ST=11 THEN IF OLDX>41
THEN X=OLDX-1
94 IF ST=5 OR ST=6 OR ST=7 THEN IF OLDX<200
THEN X=OLDX+1
95 IF B THEN X=OLDX
96 IF Y<99 THEN SOUND 2,200,2,4
97 IF STRIG(0)=0 THEN GOSUB 10100
100 POKE 53248,X
110 IF X<OLDX THEN IMG=IMG1
120 IF X>OLDX THEN IMG=IMG2
210 B=USR(VP,IMG,A+512+OLDY,A+512+Y)
220 C=PEEK(53252):IF C/2<>INT(C/2) THEN SOUND
0,100,6,6:B=1
230 IF C/2=INT(C/2) THEN SOUND 0,0,0,0:B=0
240 POKE 53278,255:SOUND 2,0,0,0
250 GOTO 90
1000 DATA 8,255,24,61,63,60,24,60,0
1010 DATA 8,255,24,188,252,60,24,60,0
5000 REM VEIW OF THE CITY
5020 SETCOLOR 0,0,14:SETCOLOR 1,8,4
5030 SETCOLOR 2,0,0:SETCOLOR 4,8,8
5040 COLOR 1:PLOT 159,95:DRAWTO 159,90:DRAWTO
0,90:POSITION 0,95:GOSUB 5170
5050 COLOR 2:PLOT 159,89:DRAWTO 159,40:DRAWTO
139,40:POSITION 139,89:GOSUB 5150
5060 PLOT 107,89:DRAWTO 107,35:DRAWTO
87,35:POSITION 87,89:GOSUB 5150
5070 PLOT 55,89:DRAWTO 55,75:DRAWTO
0,75:POSITION 0,89:GOSUB 5150
5080 COLOR 3:PLOT 127,89:DRAWTO 127,40:DRAWTO
108,40:POSITION 108,89:GOSUB 5160
5090 PLOT 75,89:DRAWTO 75,25:DRAWTO
50,25:POSITION 50,74:GOSUB 5160
```

```
5100 PLOT 75,74:DRAWTO 56,74:POSITION
56,89:GOSUB 5160
5110 PLOT 20,74:DRAWTO 20,55:DRAWTO
0,55:POSITION 0,74:GOSUB 5160
5120 COLOR 1:PLOT 149,69:DRAWTO 149,60
5130 PLOT 67,55:DRAWTO 67,64
5140 RETURN
5150 POKE 765,2:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
5160 POKE 765,3:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
5170 POKE 765,1:XIO 18,#6,0,0,"S:":RETURN
9000 LET VP=1536:REM VER POS ROUTINE
9005 RESTORE 9050
9010 FOR Q=0 TO 43
9020 READ D
9030 POKE VP+Q,D
9040 NEXT Q
9050 DATA 104,162,5,104,149,220,202,16,250,198,
20,198,222,160,0,177,224,170
9060 DATA
168,165,223,240,9,169,0,145,222,136,28,
249,138,168,165,221,240,7,177,224,15,220,
136,208,249,96
9070 REM USR(VP,IMG1,OLD LOC,NEW LOC)
9080 IMG1=VP+46:IMG2=IMG1+9
9090 RESTORE 1000:FOR Q=VP+46 TO VP+46+17
9100 READ D:POKE Q,D
9110 NEXT Q
10000 RETURN
10100 POKE A+387+Y,3
10110 IF IMG=IMG2 THEN FOR Q=X TO 200:POKE
53252,Q
10120 IF IMG=IMG1 THEN FOR Q=X TO 12 STEP
-1:POKE 53252,Q
10130 C=PEEK(53248):IF C/2=INT(C/2) THEN POKE
53278,255:NEXT Q:GOTO 10200
10140 SOUND 3,200,10,10:POP
10150 FOR Q=1 TO 50:NEXT Q:SOUND 3,0,0,0
10200 POKE A+387+Y,0:RETURN
```

So how does it work? Actually quite well. But seriously. We will start with line 97. All line 97 does is check to see if the trigger has been pushed. If it has then we gosub 10100, more on that later. Next notice we have put lines 5120 and 5130 back in except that they are a little different. They will draw two lines on our buildings so we have something to shoot at. Before we go into the sub-routine at 10100 let's look at the missle half of P/M graphics.

Previously we have mentioned that players are held in a band one byte wide (eight bits). Each bit has a binary place value from 1 to 128 so all bits on is 255 and all bits off is 0. Well, missles are very similar except that all four missles (one for each player) are defined in the same 8 bit strip. Sounds complicated you say, it isn't really. The first two bits are for missle one and the next two are for missle two and the next for missle three etc. Beyond that missles are pretty much the same as players. Each missle has its own horizontal position register just like a player. To move vertically you have to poke into memory. Here it gets a little tricky. Because all of the missles use the same strip of memory you have to do a little extra math to move one missle up and leave another still. Look at the chart below as we move some missles.

STEP	LOCATION	BIT MAP	VALUE
1	100	XXXX	15
1	101		0
2	100	XX	3
2	101	XX	12

Starting with step one we have two missles at location 100 (not a real memory location but good enough for our discussion). These two missles could be at oppisite sides of the screen but they are the same height because they are both at memory location 100. Looking at the bit map we see all four bits set (two for one missle and two for the other). At location 101 we have no bits because we have no missles there. This gives us the values 15 and 0 poked into 100 and 101 respectfully. In step two we are going to move missle two down one step. Thus in location 100 we have two bits set (the first two) and a value of three. And in location 101 we have two bits set (the next two, for missle two) giving us a value of 12. Using this thinking and our four horizontal missle position registers we can any number of missles anywhere we want on the screen. A couple more notes on missles, before we get back to our helicopter. A missle always has the same color as its player and is always only two bits wide.

Because we are only using player one we are only going to use missle one and we are going to make it a simple "-". First we start by turning on our missle. "A" is the start of P/M graphics and +387 puts us to the strip of memory that holds our missles. The +Y puts it at the same height as the chopper. We poke a three here so bits one and two are set. This gives us our "-" shape. Then we look to see which way our chopper is facing. We do this with the two IF THEN statements at 10110 and 10120. Depending on which way the chopper is facing we start a FOR NEXT loop from our chopper location to the side of the screen. We also poke the horizontal position in to the register for missle one here. In line 10130 we check for a collision as explained last month except this time we are looking for a missle/playfield collision. If there is no collision we reset the register and next the loop. If we are at the end of the loop we goto 10200 which clears the missle (pokes in a zero) and returns to the main chopper loop. But if we detect a collision we "BEEP" and POP in line 10140. (Because we are going to exit the FOR NEXT loop before completion we POP the stack to

remove the loop return address. This should be done anytime you exit a FOR NEXT loop before completing it or GOSUB but don't RETURN.) Line 10150 is a simple delay loop and then stop the "BEEP" before we remove the missle and return.

With this article we have completed our series of articles on P/M graphics. With the information in this series you should be able to write your own shoot 'em up games. You might find a good memory map helpful too. I used the book "Mapping the Atari" by Ian Chadwick extensivly in writing this series. "Mapping the Atari" is available from compute books for $14.95, a real bargain for any serious atari programmer.

Although we are done with P/M graphics and are going to leave our chopper grounded for awhile save a copy of this program as at some time in the future I am planning to come back to this program and flesh it out into a real game.

I have not decided what do my next series on so if you have a question you would like answered (about atari BASIC) drop me a message on my BBS (313-233-4226). Till next month:

KEEP WITH THE PROGRAM!

$ EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Computer Games for Gamers - Atari 800
by Brian Goluska

Last month I rated some gems of old-time gaming that are still available for your ATARI, many at distressed prices (or used). You may have missed them the first time they went around.

The GGRS (Goluska's Game Rating System): All games are rated in comparison to 3 games of bowling, 1 1/2 hours at the bowling alley. If you bowl for an hour and a half, it costs about $5. Therefore a $40 game must be worth 8 trips to the bowling alley (3 games each) to break even, or if 2 people play, it only takes 4 trips to the bowling alley (4 times 1 1/2 = 6 hours) to break even.

All of the comments below represent my personal opinion.

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EASTERN FRONT - cartridge - GGRS = 80 trips to the bowling alley (same as original EASTERN FRONT).

This version tweaks the original Chris Crawford EASTERN FRONT (rated last month). One worthless thing it does is to add levels of play that are intended to teach players how to play hex games (of which EF is a direct descendent). I doubt whether anyone could learn the game that way. Only game players who are experienced with board games can easily take to EASTERN FRONT. If I'm wrong, let me know.

One good thing it does is add air power, and another level of difficultly beyond the original. Aesthetically, it also shows the names of Soviet cities when you click on them, which I longed for in the original version.

This version is the one I still play, now and then. My high score is +43. For the experienced gamer only.

CHICKEN - GGRS = 5 trips to the arcade.

A public domain game available in the CHAOS library. A simple game of the chicken crossing the road, but with especially good "feel" to the stick and game. Some humor too. No longer state of the art, but still OK, especially for youngsters.

EMPIRE OF THE OVERMIND - ?

A very early text adventure. It parses on only 3 characters, so GO WOODEN DOOR and GO WOOD DOOR and GO WOO DOO are all the same. Still, I played it for days when my 800 was new. It had some enthusiasm that the more polished text adventures lacked.

ARCHON I & II - GGRS = 10 trips to the bowling alley. ARCHON is played on a chessboard, and the chess pieces must fight arcade style to take a square. Good graphics and sound, good concept. Best when 2 human players are competing, because the computer plays the arcade part too well.

ARCHON II changes the chessboard to a different environment for the pieces to move on. Interesting, but even tougher when you play against the computer.

CHESS - ?

I played the original Atari chess cartridge until I could beat it in a 2 minute per turn game. In a 10 minute per turn game the computer behaved until I gained an advantage. Then the computer began taking up to 40 minutes on its turn. (It cheated). I'm not into chess enough that I can occupy my mind for 40 minutes while my opponent takes its turn.

But if you're into chess, the Atari offers great opportunities for enjoyment. I recommend you talk to other chess players to evaluate many packages before you buy one. In fact, I prefer to play another human using the computer for the chessboard.

QUESTRON - GGRS = 50+ trips to the bowling alley.

QUESTRON could require more time to finish the game. A role playing game, with a simple combat system, but also "games within games" that add to the enjoyment. You don't have a choice as to character type in Questron, always starting as a serf. This is the first in a series of phases your character goes through as you progress. Between the phases are "rewards" of a sort - moments when you say "Wow" as you make a discovery that opens your way to the next phase. Some of the "games within games" are good enough to make you want to play them extra, even though your character has achieved all the development possible from that phase.

SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD - GGRS = 30+ trips to the bowling alley.

An historical simulation of the exploration of the New World by Spanish adventurers. The play system and graphics are generally excellent, although one phase of "combat" is a little odd. Combat is not required, however, and better profit may be made by exploration and trade.

The added fun of this game occurs when you generate a New World that is not historical. This means Columbus, if not careful, might sail west without finding land until he starved (all land in the southern hemisphere). Or the Aztecs might have their capitol at Plymouth Rock.

Like Eastern Front, Seven Cities is very much a one player game. After being exposed to a game or two, it isn't much fun for spectators to watch a player trying to get a really high score.

BOUNTY BOB'S REVENGE - 30 trips to the arcade.

This is the sequel to Miner 2049er. Once again, an Atari only program, not available on other systems. Play Miner 1st, then BBR, to recreate the progression.

BBR is as good as Miner, and has the added features that you might expect from years of

development between original and sequel. It does suffer a little because the arcade style game is not as fashionable as it once was.

COLONIAL CONQUEST - 20 trips to the bowling alley.

Colonial Conquest is a multi-player conquer the world game. It works pretty well, except that players take their turns in sequence, and it can be a long time between each player's turn at the screen. With dedicated game players this is ok, although you might bring a book or video tape along to a CC session.

Slightly more complex than RISK, this is easy to learn. Still, only serious gamers will appreciate CC more than once or twice.

RETURN OF HERACLES - 12 trips to the bowling alley.

A role playing game, where you choose a character from mythic Greek gods and heroes. A good playing system for more than one player, because all players play at the same time if they are together on the map of Greece. If the players are not together, they play sequentially, but the time is too short for players to lose interest between turns.

Tasks or conflicts are all based on Greek mythology. The only problem with this game is that it can be "solved" in the equivalent of a long weekend at a bowling tournament. The above games are all games that I have enjoyed, and are old enough that they might not be known by people who have bought Atari computers in the last 2 years.

You might notice that I prefer games that can involve more than one person. Though I can play against a machine OK, I prefer to use the machine to umpire games between humans, or that can make humans cooperate to achieve a goal.

And I agree that $40 is painful to pay for a game that you play for an hour, and say "that's cute", and never play again. I have also played 400 hours of MULE, which comes to 10 cents an hour, certainly cheaper than bowling or golf. The intelligent consumer can be sure to buy suitable software by communicating with other consumers.

In conclusion, Atari owners can get a tremendous enjoyment value for their dollar by buying yesterday's software at today's prices. Talk, talk, talk to other Atari owners to decide which games are right for you, and then enjoy your gaming. And tell other owners about your favorites!

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TOUCH PAD FIRST

ST Software

ST CORNER
By Gil Merciez

With the tidal wave of new releases for the Christmas season, many titles will no doubt be overlooked until after the holidays when things quiet down a bit. I just want to comment on three of the more outstanding packages that have been released in the past month or so.

First there is DEGAS ELITE (Batteries Included $80). Without a doubt DE is the most powerful bit mapped drawing program that has been seen for the ST. Retaining only hints of the older Degas, DE is now fully GEM based even using the new GDOS for fonts and is not copy protected as is all BI's ST software. Multiple screens can be held in memory (a maximum of 8 with 1 meg of memory, 3 maximum with a standard 520). Pictures of any resolution can be loaded and converted to the current screen resolution. DE will also load NEO pictures, IFF format, and there is even a desk accessory that will load TINY format pictures. The block functions allow you to cut out any part of a picture, manipulate it by stretching, shrinking, rotating, skewing, etc., save the block to disk, and on and on and on..... Owners of DEGAS can send in their original disk and upgrade to DEGAS ELITE for $40. It would be a wise investment. DEGAS ELITE is a truly impressive work from Tom Hudson.

Another impressive achievement is Flight Simulator II (Sublogic $50). The improved user interfaces and larger memories of the 16 bit machines was fully utilized by the folks from Sublogic to give ST owners a truly superior port of this universally popular program.

FS2 owners now have the choice of either a Cessna or a Lear Jet in which to explore the friendly skies and popular landmarks. It is possible to have two windows active simultaneously each with a different perspective as well as as a top down map which tracks your progress. Navigation is performed either combining keyboard controls with the mouse and drop down menus or the keyboard alone.

The screen updates seem much faster than the 8 bit version and the control panel utilizing the low res 16 color mode is much crisper and more readable. FS2 comes in two versions, one for color and a separate version for monochrome. Carefully check the box to make sure you are purchasing the correct version. The scenery could be more detailed for my taste, however there has to be tradeoff between how much territory to allow the flyer to explore and the amount of detail.

The starting location on bootup is runway 27 at the Oakland International Airport, only a few minutes flying time from the skyscrapers of downtown San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. Skilled flyers will be able to fly underneath the bridge if they have steel nerves and a steady hand. You can quickly change your starting position to one of 120 airports spanning a total of four other general areas, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Seattle. You can also engage in the World War I Ace aerial battle game. A unique feature is the Multi Player option in which two players on two computers can fly together connected through the modem port either over the phone or by using a null modem in the same room. This multi player mode can be used by any version of FS2 that supports it including the Amiga version. As for me, I'm still trying to figure out how to successfully land the plane.

The third outstanding piece of software to appear recently is Two on Two Basketball (Gamestar $45). This sports package allows one player to select one of 10 superstars as a teammate to play against one of 20 computer teams in four progressively harder divisions. With two players you can either play as teammates against a computer team or as opponents each with your own computer superstar. The graphics are smooth as you dribble down the court. Games are divided into four six minute quarters.

All player control is through the joystick as you dribble, pass, jump, and shoot. A practice mode allows you to refine your shooting ability. You will need it as even the tamest computer opponent shoots a deadly 60% accuracy against a beginning player. You have a wide range of shots including hook shots, lay ups, stuffs, and jump shots. Three point baskets are awarded for swishing the hoop from outside the circle. Fouls can be called on you as well as three second violations. The probability of sinking a shot depends on how well timed your release is as well as what type of shot you are taking and your individual attributes.

You can select from one of five offensive patterns and four defensive patterns on each drive down the court. I would think that for beginners, a two player mode with the players competing against each other would be more competitive until you gain some experience. In four or five complete games against the computer, I have yet to get within twenty points at the final buzzer.

Overall, 2 on 2 is a must have for the sports gamer. Even with 10 thumbs and molasses like reaction time, I enjoy it thoroughly.

Last Hacks

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR ATARIANS
By: Ezra Nehemiah in the South Cooperopolis Atari Monthly.

-> Thou shalt not ask IBM owners why still they hangeth on to their overpriced, underachieving clunkers; at least not more than once a day. Nor shalt thou point out that nobody ever got a raise because they bought IBM's for the company, either.

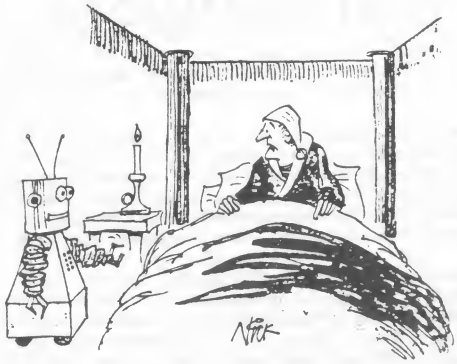
->Thou shalt not take thine Atari on the family vacation to Yellowstone; in fact, thou shalt not go on vacation trips, so that thou canst use the money thus saved to pay for additional long distance calls involved in going online with thy modem.

->Thou shalt not cause obscenities to be added to the vocabulary list of thine AtariWriter Plus spelling checker.

->Thou shalt not copy thy neighbor's SynFile disk; for the hassle of xeroxing the documentation doth render it faster, cheaper, and easier to buy thine own copy in a store.

"Remember when requests for hardware and software meant tools and lingerie?"

(Cartoons: thanks to OMNI MAGAZINE)



"Don't tell me-
Christmas yet to come, right?"

->Thou shalt not smite thine Atari or its peripherals with thy bare hand when they functioneth not properly; for this behavior shall result in down time for the system or for thy hand or for both.

->Thou shalt not boot up thine Atari on the Sabbath; for yea, even as God did rest on the seventh day, thou shalt likewise be worshipful and catch some pro football on TV.

->Thou shalt not leave thine only copy of "Larry Bird and Dr. J. Go One-on-one" lying around unprotected; for surely thy children will play Frisbee with it, or thy spouse will use it as a bookmark; for truly these people are jealous of and insensitive to the special relationship that existeth between thee and thine Atari.

->Thou shalt not use thine Atari to disrupt cable TV broadcasts or tie up the contribution phone lines of fundamentalist preachers; for the Law provideth the means for these fatocats to hurt thee worse than thou canst hurt them.

->Thou shalt not loiter near schoolyards with the intent of showing students the superiority of thine Atari over the expensive piece of trash they use in the classroom; for Apple Corporation will surely spend huge sums of money and will bear false witness against thee, charging thee with child molestation.

->Thou shalt not rescue thy Atari first in the event of a fire in thy dwelling place; rather looketh thou first to the safety of thy spouse and thy kids; for in time they may come around and turn into Atari junkies even as hath thine own smart self.

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january 1987

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Atari News

Not one but TWO new user groups join MID-MICHGAN ATARI MAGAZINE this month... Plus a message from the publisher, inside!

Two new ST magazines are making their way into users' hands. ST BUSINESS is an independant bi-monthly ($30 for six issues), and is aimed at the small business user (Check your user group library for a sample copy). STuser is a monthy magazine from England, republished and distributed from Canada. It's a chunky issue for serious programmers and users, and runs $35 a year. (G-Plus Computer Products, 130 Albert-Suite B-8, Ottawa, Ontario K1P5G4.

Sig Hartmann, ATARI Vice President, is now heading the BIG BUSINESS/ MANUFACTURER/ UNIVERSITY sales and promotion department. He encourages those who would like to SAVE BIG CORPORATE MONEY to call him at (408) 745-4967, before they buy something from the overpriced/underpowered competition. Offered are terminal emulators and other applications.

What's the best selling computer of all time? To date, the ATARI 2600 game computer (with 1/8th K of memory) has outsold any other computer product with over 20 million units!

How about corporate ranking of "real" computers? PC WEEK reports 1.7 million IBM units (all) sold in '85 for first place with 29.6% of the market. It was not ATARI's best year, but they did a respectable fifth place (with 5.5%) behind APPLE, COMMODORE, and TANDY, beating COMPAQ, H-P, ZENITH, and WANG. '86 figures should be better.

ATARI STOCK opened at $11.50 in November and has climbed to $14 in the month since. Are you rich yet?

ATARI says in their October USER GROUP NEWS that they are actually going to have a TV commercial for the XE computers. But the XE will be touted as an "ultimate game machine" rather than as a serious computer. Sigh.

The same issue of the NEWS describes their "BBS", actually FIVE independant ST sytems running the MICHTRON software. Call 408-745-5308, but beware, the system will arbitrarily switch you to an available line, and you need a password on EACH separate system. Hard to believe that ATARI can't come up with true MULTI USER.

HYUNDAI (the Korean automaker) is now also in the computer business. Marketing the "BLUE CHIP" PC clone for about $700 complete, Hyundai will sell them through DISCOUNT MERCHADISE STORES. John Rossi, president of Blue Chip, says "Commodore and Atari have done well" in that type distribution. They should be seen in TARGET stores (a Dayton-Hudson discount house) and then many others by the time you read this... where the ATARI's USED to be seen. GEE, we aren't even safe in TOYS 'R US anymore!

Volley after volley have been launched in the pages of COMPUTER SHOPPER magazine pitting the AMIGA and ST against each other. In November, "THE MYTH OF ST SUPERIORITY" attempted to smear the ST with rumors, out-of-date information, and just plain predjudice. Fortunately, even while cutting up the ST as comapred to the AMIGA, author Sheldon Leemon had to conceed on many points that the ST was in fact a very capable machine. Even though there was a very well written rebuttal by D.F. Scott in the January issue, the entire discussion does nothing but help the reputation of the ST... a machine that MAY or MAY NOT be as "good" as or "better" than the AMIGA but IS HALF the price.

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

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We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

Rich Barnes - Managing Editor
MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
(517) 349-0513

Here we are entering a new year and again we have added not only one, but two new groups. We would like to welcome the Greater Kalamazoo Atari User Group and the Washtenaw Atari Users Group from the Ann Arbor, Washtenaw Area. Welcome to the group.

We ended last year on somewhat of a sour note with the members of at least two of our member clubs. This was caused by the late arrival of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. As you all remember, we had moved our deadline to the 20th. of the month were it will remain in hopes of getting these issuses to you in time. Everyone co-operated and submitted the required materials on time, we processed the articles and ads, got them to the printer and returned from the printer with plenty of time to spare. We bundled the newsletters and got them to the mail room at MSU with time to spare. We managed to be well within the time limits and everyone should have received their issue on time.

When after eight days, we had not heard any comments from the readership, we knew something had gone wrong. John checked at the MSU mail room and immediately located the problem. The Mid-Michigan Atari Magazines had NOT LEFT YET! Even the few issues to be mailed First Class had not moved. This was an unexcusable and extensive delay. John "spoke" with both the manager and the supervisor of the MSU mail room and they both now live in fear of any further incident (John is very large and can be very loud). Arrangements have been made to totally bypass the MSU system and result in faster than ever service from now on.

No matter the reason, we are ultimately responsible for getting this magazine to you. For that reason, I personally apologize to all of you for the delay of the last issue. We will do our best to get future issues to you in time.

Just a quick note, check the ads closely for the various items available! Often a free catalog is available for the cost of an 800 phone call! When responding, please mention our magazine, as that is what makes them repeat advertisers.

VIEWPOINT

PAST AND FUTURE-
MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE
From the Publisher
John Nagy (517) 487-5646

This is our first January issue at MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, and it's a good time to look back at what we have done, and where we are going.

Lansing's ATARI club, the Capitol Hill Atari Owners' Club (C.H.A.O.S.), started MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE in July, 1986. For several years, C.H.A.O.S. had been included in the computer club magazine ENERGY (put out by the MICHIGAN COMPUTER CONSORTIUM, Lansing area clubs of several brands). Despite being one of the founding groups of the Consortium and ENERGY magazine, C.H.A.O.S. was certain that now it could do more for its members than settling for the 5-6 pages afforded ATARI by the 20-page ENERGY magazine.

We have seen exchange newsletters from a hundred other ATARI clubs from around the country, and learned from what we liked and disliked about ENERGY and all the other newsletters.

Several things seemed to be critical: APPEARANCE, CONCEPT, and CONTENT. From our experience with ENERGY, we knew that a better, larger product could be made if the efforts, money, and circulation of several groups with similar interests were pooled. We felt a newsletter of dissimilar computer clubs in one city didn't work for us, but that an all-ATARI collection of clubs from different cities could work great.

MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE was born. I took the general development, printing, and editing duties, Leo Sell helped by writing and looking for quality reprintable articles, and Jeff Bone worked hard on appearance, layout and art. We each helped get advertisers.

By the time we printed our second issue in August, we were ready to try to recruit other clubs. We had developed a format, a set of continuing columns and an attractive, orderly presentation laid out in a consistant, orderly fashion. We had a booklet form, professionally reproduced, of 28 pages or more. We scorned "printouts" of graphic screens unless to illustrate an important part of an article. ONLY ONE printer and font was used to generate all articles. We re-keyed quality articles from other newsletters to get them into our page stlye and font. ANTIC ONLINE was used but heavily excerpted to include only the meat.

Heavily technical articles were avoided unless balanced by good beginner pieces. TYPE-IN programs over a half column long were skipped. Variety, articles of no more than 2 pages, a focus on general interest rather than specialities were the watchwords. Full integration of 8- and 16-bit machine information was intentional.

The formula worked. The magazine has received raves from local and national computer columnists. We are widely quoted and reprinted (recently in ANTIC and in FAMILY COMPUTING). Since August, at least one additional ATARI user group has joined our Magazine each month. They contribute club-specific pages plus feature articles and advertising. We enter 1987 prepared to put out a 40+ page magazine each month to a subscriber base of over 700 ATARI users, plus counter sales at many locations. Richard and Judy Barnes have joined our effort and handle most of the production and editing co-ordination. Marvin Goldstein and Harmon Everett each are involved in sales and business. I am (give or take) "Publisher" with and for C.H.A.O.S., handling printing and distribution arrangements as well as new club contacts, promotions, and policy. Each of the "member" clubs have a local editor. For an all-volunteer non-profit effort, things are sailing.

At this point, several problems and possibilities present themselves. These include UNDERFUNDING vs. OVERSUPPLY OF MATERIAL, and "BIT POLITICS".

As we expand into much of the state, our circulation makes us a very attractive vehicle for national advertising. Our rates are very reasonable, about the same as many club newsletters that reach 25% of the number that receive MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. Yet, we are short of enough advertising to produce the size magazine we would like. This is due to the failure of some of the member clubs to participate in the sales effort.

At this writing, Rich has at least ten articles waiting for a chance to see print. Despite generally few feature contributions from each club, the combined total (plus quality reprint material) makes an outstanding pool of material. Each month we have had to throw away articles that have gone out of date while waiting for room. This seems an unbelievable thing to complain about considering the "no material" chant that most newsletters give. We are only sorry that we don't have the revenue to support the 40-48 pages a month that we could easily fill with prime articles. Only more sales support by member clubs will make this possible.

Lastly, we are being asked (by some groups that are considering joining in the magazine) to make some changes in the structure of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. Specifically, it is suggested

that we divide the 8-bit and 16-bit articles into separate sections, or even eliminate one or the other machine. This was the ANTIC and ANALOG approach, and now they are drawing fire for it from both sides of the STreet. I personally am convinced that "BIT POLITICS", the split between the 8- and 16-bit owners, is the single biggest threat to the future success of both groups in organized clubs.

While I don't pretend to believe that exclusive ST owners ever will seriously be interested in 8-bit specific information or user tips, it is clear that nearly ALL 8-bit owners are interested in knowing what is developing for the ST series. We have typically run about 30% 8-bit specific articles, about 20% ST specific, and the remainder has been ATARI corporate or industry information and "neutral" general feature articles. With a mix like that, to split the ST into a section of its own would make its 20% look like we are ignoring it. In reality, 70% of every issue is for the ST reader, and 80% is for the 8-bit reader. Since the 8-bit owners currently outnumber the ST owners, we feel that we are suppling a satisfying mix of useful information to BOTH sets of users in our many pages.

Division can be very damaging to both the 8- and 16 bit user groups. In many cities, the ST owners have met chilly response from the existing ATARI club and have formed their own clubs. Often the "chill" continues or escalates between the groups, the 8-bit group feeling that the ST club is elitist and snobbish, and worse yet, is "stealing" the best people in the 8-bit club. The ST owners often discuss the 8-bit hardware and people with scornful "toy" terminology and "second-class" attitude, if they even think about them at all.

Although this type of anatagonistic relationship has long existed between some ATARI and COMMODORE clubs, between kindred ATARI clubs it is even more destructive. Considering the growth of technology and new products, any group that holds too tightly to one technology will shrink and dissapear. By the same token, groups that are formed around the new technology will grow while that technology grows. Over the next "X" years, the ATARI 8-bit WILL continue to decline in sales, support, software, and users until a dedicated 8-bit user club will not be viable. Many of those members will migrate to the ST clubs, finally filling their ranks enough to have the organization and support to accomplish the sort of things the 8-bit groups now can (like starting regional magazines!).

Why allow one organization to die out while requiring another parallel group to arise? If we can keep our clubs somewhat together, each group can benefit from the other over time. The two ATARI computer lines CERTAINLY have far more interest areas in common with each other than with other brands of computer. The overlap can't be 100%, but it is big enough to make good common use of limited club managment resources. Even if there are separate meetings of the two interest areas, there is a lot of reason to stay in "one house".

It will remain the policy of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE to resist the split-up of the ATARI interest groups. We intend to continue to do as much as possible to satisfy all ATARI computer users.

The future DOES look good for MMAM despite the challenges that face us. I am very proud of all of the people that have made our magazine the fastest growing and best new ATARI publication. I don't think we could get much more enthusiasm from some of them if we DID pay them! The product, too, is VERY satisfying. There is NO newsletter or magazine (non-profit or commercial) that has more GOOD, READABLE articles per page of print than ours. The cost vs. return to each club is unparalleled by any single-group newsletter. And that sincerest of compliments, imitation, has begun to appear in some other states.

We are happy with our progress. We hope you are too. If the member clubs will help with the advertising, MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE will continue to grow, to improve, and to be worth the work.

Please contact me, or any of the local or general editors of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, if you have any ideas or opinions on the past or future of this effort- and have a GOOD YEAR in 1987!

Still de-bugging the MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE...

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C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud. (ATASCII/ASCII)

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-3590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

It's hard to believe that it is 1987 already. (It's also hard to believe that the newsletter deadline is here so soon!!). The turn of the year is always a good time to reflect on where we are, have been and are going.

As I survey C.H.A.O.S. overall, I am very satisfied. We have a large number of very dedicated people, all pulling together to make things work. New ideas are generated and exciting changes are often undertaken. The C.H.A.O.S. Libraries, 8-bit, 16-bit and Publication, all continue to grow, mature and improve. The BBS keeps getting better and better and bigger and bigger. Our opportunities for involvement and for learning, continue to grow as C.H.A.O.S. grows. The Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine just gets better and better as you can see.

All in all, I believe C.H.A.O.S. is in good condition. A big thanks to all of you who are making it work.

Looking back to the past is always profitable. C.H.A.O.S. started some 5 or 6 years ago (the memories are pretty hazy now). When I joined, it was a loose-knit group of Atari computer owners reviewing new software, repairing hardware, hacking out new programs and helping each other with programming/computer problems. Many people were willing to get deep into programming to use their machine. Others, like myself, were willing to wait for the right software to do the job and to learn a little programming just for fun. Good friendships were made and strong foundations were laid. The basic structure (Board, Corporation and governance) were laid by wise individuals from near the beginning. Ike Hudson, Rob Peck and others, blazed the trail we follow today.

Our libraries were begun because of great dedication by people like Guy Hurt and others. Aggressively seeking new public domain software, and putting it together in an organized fashion, resulted in one of the finest bases for a library in the country. We've been able to build from the foundation that was laid with the results being one of the largest, finest, and certainly best organized disk libraries in the country. The generosity of many people has built up our Publications library to a point where almost any key Atari publication can be found there.

About half-way through its life, C.H.A.O.S. began to run a BBS. With various locations and software and Sysops, the beginning was rough. Again, we owe a debt to those who saw it through. People like Barry Schroeder and Mike Clewley.

In many ways we also owe thanks to Energy Magazine. Were it not for the cooperative effort attempted there, we would undoubtedly be publishing a boringly standard newsletter and this magazine would never have seen the light of day. Energy proved that a cooperative approach can work. We applied that to the Atari community and the results are in your hand.

So, having looked briefly at the present, lengthily at the past, what does the future hold.

Well, I believe that the future for C.H.A.O.S. is bright. More and more people are getting involved. Fine projects are continuing. As long as all of us continue to help, C.H.A.O.S. will grow and prosper. That means that there will be more resources as time goes by. As time passes, new people will be needed for our continuing and our future projects. There will be many opportunities for you to be involved, and by so doing, learn more about your Atari and fellow users than you would otherwise. I hope you'll join in the efforts for your own sake as well as the Club's and your fellow Atarians.

Telecom

THE C.H.A.O.S. DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

Cold weather is keeping a lot of computerists away from the things they really prefer- like cutting the lawn, fixing the car, painting the eaves, etc. Instead, they call their friendly local BBS and see what is going on. Usually, they find a lot. They also often find the line in use. But that just helps make it more worth while when they do get through.

The C.H.A.O.S. BBS is also showing the effects of the cold... it is growing, changing, and improving every week. Already, most users have noticed marked improvements in the log-in delay, the message base speed, and little touches here and there that help you get back to where you want to be when you get lost. More of this sort of thing plus some exciting new features not seen before in any BBS are on their way... if winter lasts long enough and I can keep away from that EXCITING YARDWORK.

The M.I.O. expansion box plus the hard disk for te BBS are now a reality- even though as you read this they are not online. We bought the 256K version of the M.I.O. from ICD Corp. (who also bought a two page ad in this issue of MMAM, part of their first advertising attempts in user group newsletters!), along with a 10 MEG hard disk. When all is said and done, we expect our storage room to be VERY adaquate even for John Baker... and the speed of access to be REMARKABLE.

I again want to thank OSS Inc. for their contribution to the club of a gratis copy of BASIC XE whithout which our BBS could never have developed as it has. Somehow, having about 100K to program in is SOOOOOO much nicer than having about 32K...

Also let me begin the new year right by thanking John Baker for the terrific effort he has consistantly done for the files section of the BBS. I know he didn't expect the job to get so big, but it's his fault too. (Lets see your INDEX of all the files in the 10 MEG, John!)

You don't have a modem yet???? Check out one of the club's 1030 MODEMs and try your club BBS! They are available for a month loan by any member at the meetings. You don't come to meetings either???? Well, forget it. We can only do so much...

Call the C.H.A.O.S. BBS, 24 HOURS, 300/1200 BAUD, AT (517) 371-1106. Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

Disk Library

by John Baker

Well it's gone. I'm referring to 1986. Seemed like it just flew by. They say the older you get, the faster time seems to pass. This must be true, for even at my age, (late teens), it's already noticeable.

Oh well, at least with the holidays behind us and the dead of winter at hand, more time can be allotted for our favorite pastime. Now I realize that everyone has their own idea as to what "favorite pastime" means to them, but hopefully computing can be squeezed in there somewhere.

Now that we're all on the same wavelength, the new library listing should be just about ready by the time you read this. Three or four disks in the old listing were either consolidated or dropped, but a whole ton of new ones were added. In fact, new disks were added right up to the time for printing of the list. The lists will either be delivered in the newsletter, at the meetings, or by dogsled. Not sure which.

Fire up that 8-bit machine and take advantage of some great software additions. Turbo-Basic, the hottest new item for computing since the keyboard is here. It's been sweeping the country and has had rave reviews. I decided to give it the acid test and called upon our award winning and revered BBS Sysop, John Nagy, to give it a look see (he hates everything). Final results are not in yet, but when I last questioned him on the subject, he mumbled something about it "not being too shabby". I almost dropped the phone!!! He was trying to say he liked it!! Check this one out for sure.

Trading with other clubs is an ongoing project and I managed to wrangle away from Jerry Cross, the Genesee Atari librarian, a really great trivia game. If you are a trivia fan, then this is a must. Hope to show it at the next meeting.

Printshop Icon files are always in demand, and I have added one new disk of them and another 3 are in the works. Koala pad "PIC" files and AMS Music files seem to be growing at an astronomical rate. They now have their own section in the library.

I also received a disk to allow me to add colorful binary logo and intro screens to any disk. Got to keep you from dozing off during the disk booting process. Look for this "new look" after I've had a chance to look through the source code for this file.

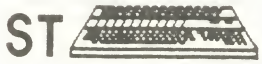
Slowly but surely many of our disk labels will also take on a more professional look thanks to the use of a commercial quality label making program. This program written by Jim Steele, president of the Genesee Atari Group, is EXCELLENT and a breeze to use. By far one of the most full featured and user friendly label programs I've seen. Jim has allowed us to use this fine program for our club labels.

Now the bad news. This program is not available to the general public. Jim is still working the bugs out of it (he's a perfectionist), and hasn't decided if he will offer it as public domain or sell it commercially. Either way, when he releases it--GET IT!!!

We've added a couple different versions of "C" and several versions of FORTH. Sally Nagy is our resident expert on these two languages and plans to make us all better acquainted with them in the near future.

Printer drivers and screen dump routines are constantly being requested. If you have written short routines to set up your printer (no matter what kind) for specific duties, please share them with us. Many new printers are sold every day, and a good number of manuals included with these printers are written in Martian. A disk compiled with a variety of setups for specific printers would be welcomed by individuals who are not fluent in Martian. Upload these drivers to the BBS with a note to me as to printer type, and what the driver does. Or print the file out and give it to me at one of the meetings.

The BBS is beginning to jump again now that colder weather has set in. Thanks to all for the great selection of files you are sending us. Sharing software with us that you enjoy enables us to offer these files to actually a national audience. Thanks too, to the members who make the monthly pilgramage to the meetings and take advantage of the excellent selection of software and information that we offer each month. Last year was a great one for CHAOS and its members. Look for 1987 to be even better.



DECEMBER ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

At the December meeting 20 people attended, almost all of them ST owners. We had 2 ST's, with FIVE disk drives, and ONE monitor. So

while Mark Smathers did demos from the ST library disks, John Johnson and I demonstrated how hard it is to connect an ST to a video system without tools, cables, or knowing what I was doing. Next meeting I promise we'll be able to use the overhead viewing system. (A secret: Since the meeting I know a way to do it)!

Besides a great deal of library work, usual discussion of problems, vendors, and software comparisons took up much of the meeting. One unusual topic was electricity. One member swears by his surge protector: When an electrical problem occurred, he lost his refrigerator, TV's, and other appliances. But his surge protector blew and his computer survived. Another member said don't EVER unground your color monitor (don't use a 2 prong adapter for its 3 prong plug).

Mark Smathers also talked about the upgrade he got for his 520 ST. While he went to 1 Megabyte now, he also had sockets put in for adding the new 1 Megabit chips when they come down in price. This will allow him to go to 2 1/2 Megabytes eventually. According to Mark, this is the best that can be done without unsoldering the original chips on the motherboard. It would be possible to go to 4 Megabytes by doing extensive motherboard work.

John Johnson and Dave Spinnet concluded the meeting with a demo of Flight Simulator II for the ST (which was reviewed last month in this magazine).

As usual, I'll close with a little tip. Many programs, like First Word, show a window of file titles when you want to load from disk. For example, First Word might show A:*.DOC, and all the titles that have the extension DOC. If you want to look at another drive, like B:, you can click on the directory line, left arrow to the :, backspace, and change A to B. The result is B:*.DOC. If you click on the grey window bar, you'll get a directory of every file on B:, or B:*.*. If you click in the titles area, however, you'll get those files that match the specifier, in this case every file ending in DOC. You can, of course, change the directory line, like D:*.PIC.

STop in at the ST meeting.

Over 100 people showed up December 20 for the annual festivities of the C.H.A.O.S. Christmas meeting. Punch and cookies brought by many members made the meeting even more friendly than ususal, and the 1/2 price disks from the library kept Malcolm Cleveland and John Baker busy all meeting (they sold about 150 disks!). To top it all, everyone at the meeting got an ATARI present- the adults each got a C.H.A.O.S./ATARI keychain with a built-in pen, and several younger members got tee-shirts and posters.

More of the handsome keychains are available from Leo at the meetings for $1.00 each. They should impress your friends and just maybe help get the word out about C.H.A.O.S...

Following a short discussion period, Frank Nagy showed STAR RAIDERS II and discussed how it does in fact differ from the "LAST STARFIGHTER". Then, his wife SALLY showed and commented on a video tape showing many of the new entries in the C.H.A.O.S. Disk Library. Brian Goluska arranged to have another fine MIDI-MUSIC demo from an ST and a Casio sythesizer. The Disk-of-the-Month wrapped up the meeting, but the crowds remained to finish the cookies and get the disks they ordered. Another fine meeting. Don't miss the next one!

Publication Review

Atari Player-Missile Graphics in BASIC
Reviewed by Kurt Hozak (CHAOS)

This is the best guide to player-missile graphics that I have ever seen. I bought the book knowing virtually nothing about pmg and finished reading the book knowing everything I ever wanted to know about pmg. Other articles and books about pmg became too technical too fast. Not with this book. It starts right from the beginning and takes you to the end.

Sample programs are included in every chapter, and there is an index and appendix in the back. It is also spiral bound, which means that you can lay it flat on a desk. One feature that I really liked was that everytime they explained anything new, they asked the question that was forming in my head and gave very well explained answers.

This book covers how to set up the pmg, defining the player image, using strings with pmg to move the player vertically (which is a LOT easier than POKEing around in memory), how to define and use missiles, changing the image size, single and double line resolution, collisions, the priority register, making five players, multi-colored players, and much, much more. It is 173 pages long and is published by Reston.

This is the most used computer book that I own and I cannot recommend it enough. It belongs in every users library!

P.S. Antic is selling it discounted from $14.95 to $9.95 for the book alone, and from $24.95 to $14.95 for the both the book and the disk.

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Presidential Mumblings for January 1987
by Jim Steele

Happy New Year! (He says, with Christmas shopping yet begun) I'm going to cut the gab short this month, mainly because I don't have anything to say. I know that's never stopped me before, but new year's is the traditional time for resolutions,eh?

The minutes department.

Well those of you who made it to the December meeting got some nice door prizes. In fact, there were enough goodies left over for everyone to get two prizes. Some of those laser cut desk sets were really snazzy. Fortunately, a riot was averted when the officer's cards started to show up first.

In other news, the timeliness of the newsletter was discussed. We also considered moving the meeting to the third Wednesday as a cure for the problem, but decided that this would cause too many conflicts with holidays. Atari planetarium was finally shown. Jerry brought his MIO board and although we ran out of time for a formal demo, we were all impressed with it. We plan to have a more complete presentation on this goodie in the future.

Well, so much for January's mumblage, see you next time,

-Jim

Next Meetings:

January 14,1987	6:30pm regular meeting
January 24,1987	9:30am Saturday session
February 11,1987	6:30pm regular meeting.
February 28,1987	9:30am Saturday session
March 11,1987	6:30pm regular meeting
March 28,1987	9:30am Saturday session

ST Disk Library

ST NEWS AND VIEW FROM FLINT
by Gil Merciez

Now that Christmas and all of these other silly holidays are behind us, its time to get down to some serious computing. I hope that you have squirreled away a couple of dollars in the back of one of your desk drawers so that you will be snatch up a few of the new GAG ST disks that will be available in January. There will be at least 3 new disks available to bring the total to 34 disks with over 10 megabytes of public domain software.

My wish came true last month and the newsletter didn't reach you until after the December meeting. No doubt, many of you missed the one time Christmas special where all GAG disks were $3. Maybe I'll run the special again in the coming months. <Then again, maybe I won't!> I will try to have enough copies of disk catalogs available so that everyone can take one home with them. I'm also toying with the idea of offering mail order service on the disks for those who can't make the meetings. What do you think of this idea? Let me know and if I get enough positive feedback I may let this idea fly. I will even absorb the cost of mailing. Would't be a bad deal for $4 a disk.

In January look for Tiny Pictures Volume 7 which includes numerous pictures of Big Cats. For the more prurient minded I may package an 'R' rated disk of pics in February. Any comments on this idea? The disk would be properly labeled so as not to offend anyone.

On Disk #32 look for a great graphic advertisement for the Atlantist BBS which includes an interesting picture and a talking blurb. This file incorporated one of the speech synthesizers that was available on a GAG disk in December. Also on #32 is a program called Easytos which is an unfinished version of the GEM desktop that makes it more Mac like and is actually quite a bit faster. It is not a

working version but it incorporates many nice ideas. A working demo of a space shuttle simulation is also included. This demo is from Michtron and the game should be available soon. Also look for a Star Trek game and a Slot Machine program.

Many more goodies await you in the GAG library. Don't miss a single disk.

FACTS AND THE ST

For those who are unaware, FACTS BBS, Jerry Cross Sysop, is back on line after an extended absence due to a faulty hard drive. With 10 megabytes of storage capacity there is more than enough room for both the 8 bit and 16 bit user to to coexist on this board. I have been adding ST downloads to the board as time permits and the number is growing. Give the board a call at (313)736-3920 and check it out.

I know many of you are new to modems and telecommunications so I'll give you a few hints and tips on using Jerry's Board. FACTS runs on an Atari 8 bit computer and uses the Express BBS program. Express was written exclusively for Atari 8 bit boards and as such lacks some niceties that ST users could take advantage of. When logging on for the first time it is important to write down the password that will be given to you. If you lose or forget this password, you will have to sign up again using a different name.

Once you have logged in and read the system bulletins you will be faced with a command line. Pressing '?' from any command line will give you the complete menu. 'G' will quickscan through all the message bases letting you read all new messages that have been posted since the last time you have logged on. A deficiency in the public message base boards is that you can't address a message to a particular individual if you start a new thread or topic. It will automatically be addressed to all. This is not all that bad as there are usually not that many messages to wade through. The message base editor is easy to use with the only drawback being that it is irrevocably set to 40 columns.

For those interested in downloading ST programs, enter 'B' to browse through download sections V-Z. <These are the ST specific sections.> After deciding on a file to download enter 'D', then the filename when prompted. Make sure that your terminal is set to plain vanilla 8 bit checksum Xmodem protocol. Express doesn't support CRC error checking and will error you out if you are in the CRC mode unless your terminal program is smart enough to automatically switch.

Almost all of the ST download files are in the ARC format which means they must be dearced using ARC.TTP before you can run them. If you wish to upload files and share them with the rest of the ST community, please ARC the files. This is done for two reasons. The primary reason is save both disk space and downloading and uploading time. An arced file is generally between 40-60% smaller and allows you to group multi-file programs into one file. The second reason is to avoid confusion as to what the proper file extension should be on a particular program. Express, as does most 8 bit Atari BBS's, uses the file extension <the three letters following the period in a file's name> for its own purposes. Express does not include an easy way to describe what is in each download directory other than giving the name of the file. With all the files Arced, you are sure of getting the correct file extension when the program is extracted. I am trying to come up with a simple, easily maintainable method for users to get complete file descriptions.

Facts is there for you to use. If you have any questions, requests, or suggestions, leave me a message on the board. Experiment and play with the commands. It is the best way to learn and for most of the GAG members it is just a local phone call away.

IF IT AIN'T BROKE, FIX IT ANYWAY

Having problems with your ST? Flint does have an authorized ST service center. Laverne Petry and his staff at National Computer Clinic on S. Saginaw & Bristol are more than willing to nurse your ailing ST back to health. Armed with the latest revision of the famous ST diagnostic cartridge, replacement chips, service manuals, years of computer service experience, and a tube of Crazy Glue, Laverne claims that he can resurrect even the most terminal ST.

Late last November I thought I had totally fried my motherboard while attempting to install a 1 meg upgrade in the ten minutes I had between dinner and going bowling. I was all set to trot out to Toys R Us to secure a new replacement. National Computer Clinic saved the day. Those who are familiar with my 520 know that I don't even bother to screw the case together or install the RF shield as I'm always pushing down on the chips. I still have that problem but it seems to be fading away somewhat. I do have a functional 1 meg 520 and for that I'm happy.

LaVerne has said that he is interested in getting involved in add ons such as 1 meg upgrades. He will be carrying the blitter chip when it becomes available later in the year and it will probably have to be installed by an authorized service center. This is not a paid political endorsement however I've had no problem with the three or four times I've had

service work done at National Computer Clinic over the past 3 years. Besides, if I hear of any ST owner who is justly unsatisfied with his work I will bring my 520 back in for service. That sort of fate is far worse than death.

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Librarians column for January

by Jerry Cross

This month, there are 6 new disks added to the catalog. After trading with several other clubs, I am now buried in programs, and it's a pleasure to dig through them looking for treasures.

DISK #158 contains educational programs. FRACTION is a tutorial/game that teaches fractions, TRIVIA is another trivia question game, with a sample data file. Also, HOMEWORK HELPER is another Q/A program, with a QUESTION maker program, and a data file on the reverse side of this disk.

DISK 159 has several disk utility programs. Everything from DOS modification programs to AUTORUN.SYS makers. There are also some revised versions of popular programs, including POLYCOPY. Now you can copy to/from any disk drive (1-8) and sd/ed. HOMEBREW and DISKTOOL are also updated.

DISK 160 is another education disk. Featured is THE DRILL INSTRUCTOR, which is a word guessing game for children. You can create your own word files with QUESTION.

Disk 161 is the XMAS disk that was given out at the 1985 Christmas meeting. I don't know why I waited untill January to put this out (another snafu!). Featured on this disk is the MOVIE MAKER x-mas greatings from Antic.

Speaking of Movie Maker, DISK 162 features the Circus Movie Maker files you may have heard about.

DISK 163 was given to me just before the deadline (thanks MACE). This is a CPR first-aid tutorial on a 2-sided disk that features animated cartoons and text. Adults should check this out first before showing it to kids so they can better answer their questions, and help them along. Everyone should learn CPR, and this is a great starting tool!

Finally, DISK 164 contains several games. MINIGOLF is a putt-putt-golf game that includes a program to design your own course. AMAZEA is a must have game for you maze freaks. Climb is a fast-paced climbing game.

That's it for this month, now on to other things. I seem to have a problem with some of my master disks. If you are experiancing any problems please let me know. I have some disks that have developed bad sectors, and it may have been from my bad Indus drive. Don't get mad, let me know if you have problems!

Taricon II is really rolling. If you have experience in advertising, accounting, or printing/typesetting, and would like to help us out please contact me. We need some advice on our printing and other matters, and can use some help.

Finally, my bbs is growing slowly but surely. Thanks to Gil Merceiz, I now have loads of ST programs available for downloads, and will soon have an index file for my 8-bit programs. It's going to take a while to finish (remember I had over 500 files at one time) but it won't be long now. Please remember to leave a description of any uploads you send me.

That's it, see you at the meeting.

About Genesee Atari Group

Jim Steele	President
Gil Merciez	Vice President & ST librarian
Matt Howe	Vice President (8)
Jerry Cross	8-bit disk librarian
Jim Tuma	8-bit disk librarian
Nick Klak	Print librarian

Mailing address:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, located at
2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint,MI.

Meetings begin at 6:30pm. We also have a Saturday morning session for second-shifters. This group meets on the fourth Saturday on the month, during the school year. Come on out and say "G'day"

G.A.G. membership dues are $10 per year. Membership benefits include our newsletter (part of this publication) and access to our pd disk and print libraries. If you choose to join to mail, checks should be made payable to Jim Steele.

<thank you for your support>

EIGHT IS ENOUGH

Help needed from 8-bitters
by Dave Pettit

Ever since I heard about programs to create a mini-newspaper with an 8-bit computer I have been searching for one for my Atari 800. So far I have only found one program for other computers and one from Xlent Software that is apparently hard to use.

The first program is 'The Newsroom' by Springboard Software, Inc. Their program allows the user to enter their own text, choose from several fonts and several graphics, and merge it all together to form a fancy 8 1/2 by 11 newspaper. This copy could be printed several times on your printer or used as a master at a professional printing shop. Nwespapers could be made for your social club, for your church, for school announcements, for classroom writing activities, your families annual newsletter, and more.

Another program by Springboard Software, Inc. is their "Certificate Maker". This program is similar to Printshop but it makes an 8 1/2 by 11 award with border, graphic pictures, and text to the user's specifications. This program, too, could be used by a myriad of people -- probably you, too.

The problem is that Springboard Software, Inc. is "not currently planning on converting these programs to the Atari" according to a represenative of the company. But it came to me that if enough 8-bit Atari owners expressed a real interest in their software, they would be foolish not to make it for the Atari. I believe this is what happened to Broderbund Software and their Printshop program.

Here is what you can do. Write or call Springboard Software, Inc. (7808 Creekridge Circle, Minneapolis, MN 55435, Ph. (612)944-3912) and tell them in your own words that you would like to see both programs converted to the Atari 8-bit computers. Tell them how you plan on using them, giving them the idea that there are more people in the country like you with an Atari.

Your efforts may convince Springboard that there truly is a market for their fine products. If it does, it will provide us all with some terrific and useful software and keep me from buying an Apple clone which I will not use except for this software. I thank you in advance for your help.

Authorized Atari Service Center
For all 8-bit and ST Computers

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CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-6642
Editor	Wolfgang Mueller	789-8917
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-4599
P-R Chairman	William Locke	782-6873
Membership Coor.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreatior Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

Presidential address

by Harold LaRue

Well did everyone get a bunch of new ATARI stuff for X-Mas ? How about showing some of it off at the meeting ! Just call us first so we can be ready for it.

I was extremely happy with the turn-out for the Dec. meeting. We certainly raised a lot of money! Let's keep up the support!!!

It seems that ATARI is donating a bunch of promotional stuff to raffle off at the Computer Faire.
Speaking of the Faire...We still need a couple more people to man the displays. If you can spare a couple hours on Feb. 21 & 22 call any of the officers. We need you !!

An ST SIG will soon be popping up and ST programs will be added to the library!!!

Hopefully, the new CACE BBS 'The KEEP' will be running by now. It will include a CACE section and ATARI up and downloading! It is 24hrs-300/1200 baud-and is run by me!!! I'm sure the latter will be the main attraction to the board.
Also, it wil be run on BBS Express!

The # is (517) 536-8239 !!!

Give me a call !!!

Meeting minutes

by Joe Cripps

Hello,everyone. A couple of opening remarks. First I am happy to be the new secretery of CACE. And this is the first time I have done something like this, so hang in there. Onward and upward.

The December meeting was opened by our new President, Harold LaRue. The first item of business was that the CACE article in the newspaper is in error,the date of our meetings incorrect. It was noted that we no longer had a public relations (PR) chairman. Scott Boland asked for a volunteer, Bill Locke gratiously volunteered to be our new PR Chairman. Thanks, Bill.

The meeting then moved on to a discussion of the upcoming Computer Faire we a planning for the third week in February at Westwood Mall. Harold noted that will still need more equipment to be used at the faire and volunteers to help. Commitments for equipment and volunteers were made, but you never Know when someone may not be able to make it, so if you are interested please contact Harold. Bob Kingsbury noted that he has been in touch with Atari and they have promotional material available and Scott Boland noted that he has been in touch with local businesses who handle Atari products and stated that Sid Youngs and Wards would be willing to donate some software for a raffle.

Harold announced that we are trying to start two new users SIGS. One for the 8-Bit Machines and one for the ST Machines. Wolfgang Mueller volunteered to assist with the 8-Bit SIG. Do to the low number of new users at the meeting it was proposed that the issue be tabled until the January or February meeting.

The Newsletter Editor noted that input to the next issue is due to him by the twentieth of each month. Articles by our membership are needed.

Harold noted that he will be starting up a new BBS. Membership will be $5.00 annually. He hopes to have it in operation early in 1987.

Scott identified the need for software and hardware demonstrations at the meetings. Contact Brent Fisher to arrange to give a demonstration at the next meeting.

Finally, Scott stated that he investigated obtaining membership identification cards and wanted to know if the membership would be interested in them. The idea was put to a vote and the membership present decided not to obtain membership cards.

Well that's about all for now. Remmember the club is only as good as you make it and only worth what you put into it.

I hope all of you had a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Scott Boland

Since the last treasury report the club paid out $1.31 for receipt books. We received $90.00 for dues, $12.50 for the fifty/fifty drawing, and $74.00 for copy fees from the public domain library. The grand total of the treasury as of December 18th is $489.37. It looks as though the library is starting to see some real action, thanks to the work of our librarian, Bob Kingsbury.

I would like to welcome Donald and Diana Day as our newest members to the club. I am sure you will find it a rewarding experience.

I would also like to thank Bill Locke for volunteering to take on the job as the public relations chairman for the club. We need more people that are willing to give a little time in order for the club to progress.

That's all for now, hopefully next month I'll have more time to write the article on modifing a Percom disk drive so that it can be configured for drives 1 thru 4.

Coordination Corner

by Brent Fisher

This column is here to thank those members of CACE who donate parts of their systems and to also thank those who gave demonstrations at the last meeting, and to announce demonstrations scheduled to be held at the next meeting.

First off I'd like to thank Joe Cripps for lending his computer and monitor and I'd also like to thank David Farmer for the use of his disk drive. As for demostrations I'd like to thank Tim Sharp for bringing his 520ST and showing ST Star Raiders and Flight Simulator II, along with John Charles for bringing Star Raiders II for the 8-bits. One thing I would like to bring up is that if I've asked you to bring something and you can't show up for the meeting please call me sometime before the meeting to let me know so that I can make other arrangments, you can usually get me after 5:00 weekdays and if you're calling on the Sunday before the meeting you can get me from between about 11:00 and up to about 12:30.

O.K. now for the next meeting: a 1020 printer/plotter demostration of how you can get your MicroIllustrator files to print in four colors, and some small program listings. Also a 520ST demostration of Silent Service. If you have any suggestions or comments on the demos or would like to do some demos yourself call me at 764-4599.

GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS
by Dan Youngs

Well another YEAR, another President!!! I enter this job with a little apprehension, not knowing just what is expected of me, but I love a challenge!! So here goes 1987, lets make it a GREAT Year! I have been running ideas through my mind as to our club and ways to make our atari computers more enjoyable and I've got lots of them. I hope you have too, because at the next meeting we will be looking for your input so please bring your ideas!!!

At the last meeting we agreed to use the new Mid Michigan Atari Magazine as our newsletter. I think this is a great move, and it should help keep members even if they don't attend the meetings. Gene VanDeraa will be giving his BASIC class this next meeting, so bring your note pads!! We hopefully will have the Analog disk straightened out, and at least have December's disk there.

Many of you have your membership come do in the first months of the year. PLEASE CHECK and see what your renew dates are.

I will list the new officers of our club:

President
Dan Youngs 372-3229

Vice President
Frank Fellheimer 657-6106

Treasurer
Steve Haddix 349-1646

Secretary
??????????????

Librarian
Steve Buechler

Disk Chief
Dave Oldenburg

There you have it, the new officers. As you can see we are still in need of a secretary. Please consider the job.

The next meeting will be Saturday January 10, 2:00pm at 103 Dewing, Kalamazoo College.

HAPPY NEW YEAR
from Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine

Here we are at the beginning of a new year, 1987. In looking back over the past six months, we have added at least one club each month. We now cover most of the Michigan Atari Users Groups. This month we wish to bid welcome to two clubs that are joining us. They are the Greater Kalamazoo Atari User Group serving the Kalamazoo Area and the Washtenaw Atari Users Group serving the Ann Arbor and Washtenaw areas of Michigan. It is our hope that with your support we will continue to grow and expand in the future.

Rich Barnes

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2. Printer Connection

It may look just like an ordinary cable . . . but don't let it's simplistic styling fool you! This little dynamo's electronics are built right into the cable end and it possesses the power of compatibility . . . *printer* compatibility. (Compatible with all 'centronics' parallel printers.) With the Printer Connection, you're no longer limited to 'Atari Only' printers.

So, for you "adventurous" Atari owners who dare to explore the world of printers . . . this one's for you! **$59.95**

3. Multi I/O

Five functions in one box give your 130XE or 800XL the leading edge in performance and execution.

1) RAMDISK: Choose from two versions; 256K or 1Meg. Built in software allows the RAM to be partitioned into multiple disks as desired. The Multi I/O has its own AC power supply which allows the RAM to retain its memory when the computer is off.

2) PARALLEL PRINTER INTERFACE: A 'centronics' type parallel interface which uses a standard 850 cable. Accessed as P1: or P2: with or without LF.

3) SERIAL PRINTER/MODEM INTERFACE: This port accepts either a serial printer or RS232 type MODEM. The 850 handler is built in; always there when needed, which means an extra 1800 bytes of free memory! Built in software also allows a serial printer to appear as a parallel printer and provides it with XON/XOFF software handshaking.

4) SPOOLER: Use any amount of RAM as a print spooler. Works with either of the specified printer ports. Built in software features: Pause, Resume, Repeat Copies, Clear and Size.

5) HARD DISK INTERFACE: Supports up to eight SASI and SCSI controllers at the same time to use industry standard 5-1/4" and/or 3-1/2" hard drives. 256K **$199.95** 1Meg **$349.95** 130XE Adapter (adds two cartridge slots) **$19.95**

4. Optional 80 Column Adapter

Tune-in to 80 columns of information with the addition of our new 80 Column Adapter. Simply plug it inside of the Multi I/O case and watch it perform! The Adapter supports both monochrome composite and RGBI monitors. **$99.95**

AFA 80 Column Boards (for the Atari 800) **$99.95**

5. US Doubler

Expanding the 1050's strength is what ICD's US Doubler is all about . . . a true performer in the niche of hardware modifications. With the simple addition of this chip set, your Atari is transformed into a powerhouse, radiating with innovative qualities never before possessed in a 1050: like true double density for greater storage and an accelerated I/O rate designed to triple your speed when combined with SpartaDOS.

Furthermore, the US Doubler is fully compatible with existing Atari software and not only supports true double density but, single density

Why So Friendly...

and the 130KB 'Dual Density' (1050 Mode) as well. ICD's US Doubler Package comes complete with two plug-in chips and SpartaDOS Construction Set (including two manuals and two program diskettes). **$69.95**

US Doubler 1-4 without SpartaDOS Construction Set **$39.95**

6. SpartaDOS Construction Set

Perfection . . . that's how we describe our DOS and we're sure you'll agree when you put the SpartaDOS Construction Set to work. It supports everything from the 810 disk drive to hard disk drives, RAMDISKS with the RAMBO XL modified 800XL or 1200XL, the 130XE, the modified 320K XE plus the AXLON 128 board for the 800! And there's more . . .

A special menu file allows rapid transfer, erasure and lock or unlock of tagged files, using only the Space Bar, Option, Start, and Select keys. The utility package also features a 32 character keyboard buffer, intelligent switching between disk densities, a binary file game menu, subdirectories, time/date file stamping, and a 175 page manual containing everything you ever wanted to know about SpartaDOS and the US Doubler. **$39.95**

7. SpartaDOS X

Just what your 8 bit has been waiting for . . . a cartridge based DOS which adds increased power to your computer and includes a surplus of features such as 80 column support, Ultra Speed operation with the US Doubler and the new 3-1/2" Atari drives plus high speed support for standard Indus GT drives. And for you programmers, now the time consuming process of searching and indexing is streamlined due to the built in data base's incredible speed. **$79.95**

8. R-Time 8

We've got the *time* if you've got the Atari. In fact, the R-Time 8 will even provide you with continuous and automatic date information as well! Its unique piggyback cartridge sports a clock board and a three to five year battery back up. A top extension port welcomes the use of additional cartridges since this handy device of ours requires no cartridge area memory of its own. What's more, the R-Time 8 works with all DOS types and plugs into any slot on your Atari computer.

Put our SpartaDOS to work with the R-Time 8 and just like magic . . . each file you create or rewrite is now instantly tagged with time and date information. We're sure that the R-Time 8 will add a new and exciting dimension to your Atari, one that you'll rely on *time* after *time!* **$69.95**

9. RAMBO XL

You'll be saying "thanks for the memory!" after the RAMBO XL transforms your 800XL or 1200XL into a mighty 256K computer and makes it memory compatible with the 130XE. Now your XL can support BASIC XE extended mode or the standard 64K RAMDISK supplied with Atari DOS 2.5. The new RD.COM handler supplied with SpartaDOS Construction Set gives a 192K RAMDISK . . . that's enough memory to duplicate a full double density disk in one pass! Our RAMBO XL package includes a plug-in decoding board and complete installation instructions.

You must supply the eight 256K DRAMS (available from ICD for $32.00) and the DOS of your choice. The RAMBO XL provides a low cost answer to high performance memory enhancement. **$39.95**

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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

January 10th at 2:00 pm.
February 14th at 2:00 pm.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The club is looking healthier all the time! At the December meeting we signed up 5 new members (all ST'ers!), and had several renewals bringing the club balance up to $221.79. This means that we can start having raffles again! But just because we're looking better, don't get the idea that we can all coast along. I need your ideas and your help. PLEASE...if you want to submit an article for the newsletter, do it!! If you want something covered at our meetings, then speak out! We've already had some good ideas to start the new year out, let's keep it up.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley..President. ....(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt.Treasurer/Sec .(517)792-6029
Al Jennings...8-bit Disk Lib.(517)790-1980
Lance Middleton.....ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman...Assist. ST Disk Librarian

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Mid- Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

The January TAG meeting will focus on Databases and Spreadsheets. We will start out the meeting with a brief description of what a database and spreadsheet are and their possible uses. The databases to be demoed include:

PD Database (8-bit)...Al Jennings
Synfile (8-bit).....Marty Schmidt
Zoomracks (ST).....Paul Bork

The spreadsheet that will be demoed will be the GEM version of VIP, a Lotus 123 clone, by LeRoy Valley. This powerful spreadsheet emulates the popular Lotus 123 on the IBM computer and can even read files created on 123 on the IBM!

RAFFLE...

At the January meeting the club will be purchasing two of the Epyx 500XJ joysticks to raffle off. The raffle tickets will be $1.00 each, and the joysticks will be raffled off separately. These new sticks from Epyx are really hot little items. They are custom designed to fit in the palm of your hand and are guaranteed for 5 years or 5 million shots (whichever comes first...I wonder how they count the number of shots?). These sticks work equally well on the 8-bits or the ST, so show up and buy a raffle ticket or two!

The emphasis of the February meeting will be on languages. Look for coverage of Basic XL and Kyan Pascal for the 8-bits and Megamax C and the LDW Basic Compiler for the ST.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

E B V

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Nelson Greene...Disk Drive
...TV set
Marty Schmidt...Atari 800

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Frank Serresseque...Monitor
...Disk Drive
Lance Middleton...Keyboard

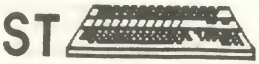
Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.

RELICS TO RELISH

The annual Christmas Swap'N'Shop bash was a great success! Everybody had plenty to sell (which means that there was plenty to buy!) and there was even a reasonable amount of ST goodies available. One table in particular looked like a small Atari store going out of business sale. Seems like Marc (who now has an ST) recently decided to chuck all of his old 8-bit stuff, and this meant a lot of great buys for the 8-bit users.

The 1040ST with the Casio CZ-101 was a very impressive sight. As it began to play all of the old favorite Christmas songs and display Christmas pictures, a good sized crowd began to build around it. The demo being run was called Alite and was produced by Audio Light, makers of Music Studio and N-Vision. All of the pictures were from the N-Vision program and the songs being played came from (you guessed it) Music Studio. This disk is available in our public domain disk library, if you didn't get a copy at the meeting. Music Studio was also demoed briefly and many songs were loaded up and played (Ghostbusters sounded great!). Music Studio allows you to place music notes on a staff and then play them through either the monitor speaker or a synthesizer. Several games which utilized the midi port were loaded up and displayed. ST Karate and ST Protector (both by Paradox software) sounded much better through the synthesizer than through the speaker.

Al Jennings indicated that he could not handle the ST portion of our PD library, as he had no way of checkig the contents of the disks, or of making copies for anyone. Asking for volunteers to assume the position of ST disk librarian, we got an enthusiastic response! We will have two ST disk librarians. Lance Middleton will be the ST disk librarian and Ron Hoffman will be the Assistant ST disk librarian. Ron comes from CACE (Cascade Atari Computer Enthusiasts) and has all of the PD software from the CACE library. These two will generate a complete listing of the available PD software (about 30 single sided disks) and (hopefully) will supply me with a column regularly to update us as to what is being added. Congratulations Lance and Ron!



ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley

OK class, how many of you are still looking for a good word processor? Please click your keys in response to the question. WOW, the clicking in here is deafening! Seriously, I have been waiting for a year now to see a GOOD word processor, and one has finally arrived -- but I have yet to see it advertised anywhere!

I'm talking about HabaWriter II by Haba Systems. I was one of the ones who originally purchased HabaWriter and got burned with a program full of bugs and not a lot of features.

Several months after sending in my warranty card I got a letter in the mail stating that if I sent in $10.00 and my original HabaWriter disk, I could get HabaWriter II. This same letter included a whole list of promises (sometimes called features) of the added enhancements in HW II. I thought, what the heck, the original program I had was worthless to me, and what was another 10 bucks?

Five months went by and I thought that Haba had either lost my check or gone out of business (No, that rumour is NOT true!) when lo and behold, HW II arrived! First, let me tell you what it does not have. It does not have a built in spelling checker. That's it in the "does not have" department. As a pure word processor, however, it's the best I've seen yet. The following word processors are ones which I either own or have seen in action:

TextPro, by Abacus
First Word, by GST
ST Writer, by Atari
ST WordWriter, by Timeworks
Regent Word, by Regent

HW II tops all of them in simplicity of use and convenience of features. I have yet to find a bug in the program. First, lets cover some of the standard features that HW II has:

* Supports both their formatted file and ASCII files.
* Supports full GEM mouse selection and movement of text.
* Offers Cut and Paste - even between documents.

* Offers Search and Replace functions.
* Is a What You See Is What You Get WP.
* Shows Italics, Super and Subscripts, Light and Bold text, and underlining on screen.
* Has a very flexible printer formatter that can be configured for any printer on the market.
* Supports headers and footers.

Well, that was a list of the standard options found on most decent GEM based WP, and all of them function properly in HW II. Now lets get on to the good stuff that other word processors don't offer.

FOOTNOTES!!! Yes, this is the first word processor that I've found that actually implements footnotes properly. Just select Footnote from the drop down menu and a superscript 1 will pop into your document at the cursor location. A new window is opened and you just type in your footnote as you want it to appear in the document. When you select Footnote the second time HW II places a superscript 2 in your document, etc. Since the footnote is formatted separately from the rest of the document, you can double space your document and single space your footnote. Or you can indent the footnote, or...well, you get the idea, footnotes work great! You tell HW II how many lines to use for footnotes, and if you exceed the total number on any one page, the rest of your footnote is carried over to the next page.

FORMAT ... I know, you're thinking that other word processors have format commands too right? Wrong. How many of them actually work on an entire document...even if the document isn't originally from that word processor? None that I know of, they all seem to have bugs. HW II works flawlessly. Want to justify all of your text Left? How about Right? Or Centered? And then there's Flush (which uses microspacing). The entire document gets formatted in your new style immediately. Don't want to format the entire document? Then don't, just do a paragraph, or a sentence. HW II handles all of these situations easily!

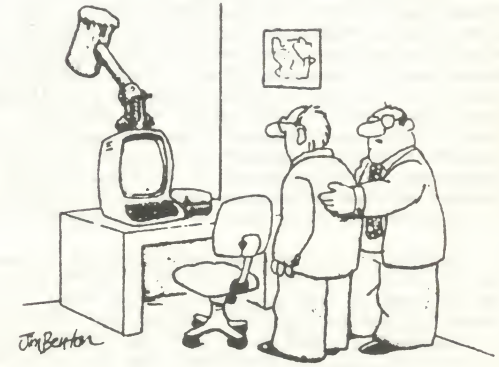
GLOSSARY ... This is one of the slickest features found in HW II. You can create your own glossaries and store common phrases, large words, or EVEN PRINTER CONTROL CODES. With one simple command these items can be selected and dropped into your document. Control codes on HW II show up as a small "control indicator" in your document - but only if you ask for them. Control T toggles the display of control indicators on and off. After creating custom printer commands (for such things as Elite NLQ double struck text), just store the symbol in the Glossary and stick a description next to it. The next time you want to use this code, select Glossary Get and select Elite NLQ and the control codes will be placed in your document!! With this feature, you can wring every last available command out of that printer of yours! You can create more than one Glossary file.
PAGINATION ... HW II now supports Automatic and Manual Pagination. When you (or HW II) sets a page break it shows up visually on the screen as a dashed line. Nice feature.

BACKGROUND PRINTING ... HW II allows you to print a document while you're working on the word processor. The printing is considerably slower, but it's a nice feature nonetheless.
PRINT FILTERS ... HW II supports special characters, such as those found on the box in 1st Word. The print filter can be created for any printer, allowing you print special characters.

KEYBOARD ... Want to reconfigure your keyboard so that an Alternate A generates an Atari Fuji symbol? You can do it with the keyboard modifier program that Haba supplies you with. You can assign any key to any character in the Atari character set, then save the keyboard configuration.

HW II also supports multiple line spacing, automatic page numbering, and date insertion. This is the word processor to buy! It works, and it works well. I'm writing my newsletter on HW II, and having a good time doing it! HW II is unprotected, so it runs great on a hard drive. The only feature that I'de like to see is the ability to save a configuration file to store the default file paths.

Well everybody, see ya next month!



"The program is a breeze.
Just watch your spelling."

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING: JANUARY 13 AT WINES SCHOOL

REPORT ON GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 12/9/86

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Mike Pieronek. Mike announced that he was pleased to see Atari ST advertising in Newsweek. Mike introduced Barb Franczyk, M.A.C.E. Convention Manager, and Jerry Cross of the Genessee Atari Group. Barb and Jerry led a discussion of the upcoming 'Taricon II' Atari Festival that is being sponsored jointly by M.A.C.E. and Atari.

Barb noted that Jack Tramiel has recognized the importance of supporting the Atari user groups. However she feels that Atari is still understaffed and needs to improve it's ability to make and keep promises. She feels that the volunteer group is working out very well and asked for help with publicity.

Doug Feldman announced to the membership that he had been approached by CHAOS in Lansing to see if there was any interest in joining the Mid Michigan Atari Magazine. This multi-group newsletter is only slightly more expensive than the printed newsletter we are currently producing and would give our members first-hand information about what other Michigan user groups are doing. It was agreed that we would join on a trial basis to see if these newsletters would be received BEFORE our regular monthly meetings.

Mike Olin demonstrated Microsoft Basic II. He noted that his original purchase of MS Basic was in 1983 when the disk-based version sold for $69. The current version is sold in cartridge form with an extension disk that contains features used in programming but are not critical for running programs. It now sells for $39 and less. It is extremely similar to the language built into the Commodore computers and Level II Basic for the Tandy computers. Documentation includes tips on how to 'port' programs from these other languages and from Atari Basic. This BASIC language leaves only 20644 bytes available for programming. Mike noted that there is little to no software support for this language and does not recommend purchase except for the above-noted similarities to other computers.

Mike also demonstrated Basic XL by OSS which leaves 33525 available bytes. It is extremely compatible with Atari Basic and runs approximately 3-4 times faster. (It runs the Eratosthenes Sieve benchmark in 2 minutes and 41 seconds as compared to over 5 minutes for Atari Basic.) Mike noted the 'SET' command that allows optional alteration of a variety of standard parameters, e.g. changing the prompt character used in an INPUT statement or allowing keyword entry in lower-case. He also noted several DOS-type commands from Basic.

Craig Harvey demonstrated Kyan Pascal which seemed to take a long time to compile but ran at near M.L. speed. Craig shared Mike's opinion of MS Basic, that this language also enjoys little support on the Atari's.

Mike Pieronek then demonstrated ACTION! by OSS. This language 'stole the show' with it's speed and terrific editing features. (ACTION ran the Sieve in less than 2 seconds.) Mike said it is a difficult language to learn as he had been toying with it for over two weeks and felt that he had only scratched the surface of learning it. He showed the ability to edit two programs simultaneously (using upper and lower windows) and moving program lines between windows quite readily. He also indicated that this language was worth the purchase price if for nothing more than to use the editor as a word processor.

The meeting was then adjourned and the library was opened for disk sales and the ST Sig ran various demonstrations of adventure games.
Recording Secretary, Mike Olin

WAUG DISK LIBRARY NEWS

At the January 13, 1987 meeting we will discuss a new venture for WAUG, the start of the Atari ST Disk Library. All WAUG ST planning is being supervised by Craig Harvey. He has suggested that ST disks be priced at $5.00 each for members only. We are actively seeking public domain programs for the ST. You may contact Craig with by calling his BBS (761-2444) or bring disk to the next meeting and Craig will swap with you. We hope that this new feature of WAUG will encourage Atari ST owners to participate in our user's group as we begin our new full-support ST activities.

The Atari 8-bit disk library will also be improved with the addition of Harry Price as Assistant Librarian. Harry has submitted several 'theme' disks that we will introduce at the next few meetings. At the January meeting, we will also demo the 8-bit Database disk submitted by Doug Feldman.

ST CORNER by Craig Harvey

This is being composed a little quicker than I'd planned in order to get it into this new mag we're trying out. Therefore it may not cover as much as usual, but the rest of the mag will probably make up for it.

For the January WAUG meeting the ST will get more time in the regular meeting, rather than the 30 minutes after the regular meeting. Therefore, we can do some more extensive demos and have more time for questions/answers. So what sort of demos will there be?

Here are some things we can cover in upcoming meetings:
* Programming languages *
* Databases *
* Games *
* ST Telecommunications Programs *
* Word Processors *
* Painting/drawing Programs *

These are not in any particular order. For the January meeting we will cover some programming languages simply because I know there are a number of them owned by myself and other members who could demo them. So if you have any ST language packages other than Modula-2 (I get to demo that one) be prepared for me to give you a call and ask you to show how it works.

If the mail order companies don't slow down too much over the holidays, I will also be able to show the MT C-shell multi-tasking, multi-user system from Beckemeyer Development Tools.

By the way, if you've been holding off from coming to WAUG meetings due to the lack of enough ST support, the time has come to do something about it. WAUG is ready to set up a disk library ($5/disk for members), allow more time for the ST at meetings, and provide more ST coverage in the newsletter. To make this a reality, we need ST members. So show up and bring friends who haven't discovered WAUG yet.

May the holidays bring you all the software you've been waiting for...

DATABASES ON THE 8-BIT ATARI by Doug Feldman

Ideally, a Database program on your computer should be flexible enough to handle many different types of information and allow creation of unique print-outs to suit the specific application. My first exposure to Databases was the 7-part BASIC program published in the old Softside Magazine (Sept. 1980 to March 1981). Mark Pelczarski discussed many of the most desirable features and included listings for the Atari computer. The main problem with the program was that it was very long and did not leave much memory space for the RAM based filing system. Furthermore, the program executed very slowly and crashed alot when it did work.

Since that time, many commercial Database programs have been available. These include: DataPerfect, Atari Mailing List (on cassette!), Atari Home Filing Manager and HomeFind. Recently, Analog Magazine published The Analog Database (Oct. 1986).

Over the last several years, I have worked on creating my own Database system. I wanted it to be versatile enough to handle various applications and execute fast enough to overcome the inherent slow operation of Atari BASIC. My persistent collection of most issues of COMPUTE and ANTIC magazine provided me with several machine language subroutines that all operate on one of Atari BASIC's unique features: unlimited string length. (Actually, I found that the maximum allowed string length is 32,000 bytes!)

As development of this program progressed, I discovered that one of the most critical aspects of a good Database program was the print-out format for individual records. A single generic print-out did not really suit all possible applications. Instead of attempting to create a 'programmable' print-out feature, I decided to utilize a modular approach to the program. Thus, the user can design the desired print-out format in a short BASIC subroutine. This subroutine is then merged into the 'generic' Database program. This creates a 'dedicated' Database program for each print-out requirement. In my way of thinking, this is a great convenience.

I have decided to enter this program into the WAUG Disk Library. It includes several different Database files taken out of the World Atlas. Also, I have been using a 'dedicated' version of the Database to store the WAUG membership lists and to print-out the newsletter mailing labels. I will present a short demo of the whole system at the Jan. 13 WAUG meeting.

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

JAN 13 --- ST DEMONSTRATIONS & 8 BIT DATABASES
FEB 10 --- TELECOMMUNICATIONS & MEET THE SYSOP!
MAR 10 --- WORD PROCESSORS & FOOD PROCESSORS
APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES & PAC MAN MARATHON
MAY 12 --- LOCAL ATARI SOFTWARE & AUTHORS
JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER SELECTIONS

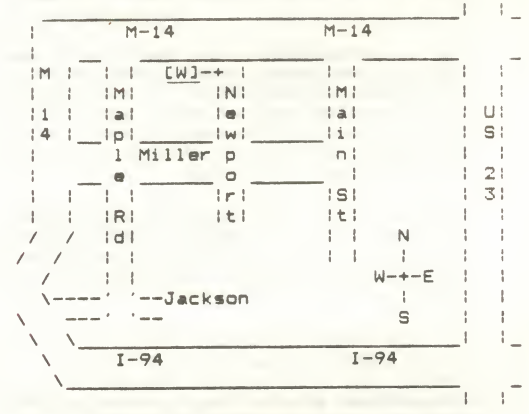
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

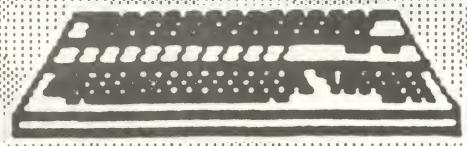
WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

IN ANN ARBOR:
FULL SUPPORT FOR THE ATARI ST
1040ST 520ST



STATE STREET COMPUTERS

STATE STREET COMPUTERS
334 South State Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
Phone (313) 663-0090
Also, call our BBS running on MICHTRON's ST BBS System running whenever the store is closed!

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Presidential address

The Chairmans Letter Thomas Siemietkowski

Trying to get this letter in perspective is hard because I am writing it before our next meeting so that it will be ready for the January meeting.

The last meeting was a disaster; only one regular member and two new members showed. People, this is your group, and without your active participation there is no group. Monthly, I hear complaints and concerns about where we are going or what we are to be doing. Well, it is hard to go anywhere or do anything without people for input or participation. Membership is slowly dissipating, except for the old diehards and a few new members. I have asked you all about trying to recruit new people, but the efforts have all been nil except for myself and one other member. If you have problems attending meetings at this time for any reason, we can maybe change the meeting time or maybe even meet bi-monthly. Please vent your concerns with me or any other member of the executive board. The group we have are very compatible with needs and capabilities of each other and we have a lot of fun with each other and with our computers. We have to stay together to continue to progress and grow but we have to be together to get this accomplished. I am personnally ready for your phone calls at any time in the evening.

Our January meeting is also our officers election meeting so it is of great importance that you attend.

I would like to take this time to thank all my fellow officers of the past year for their time and their work to keep this group alive and productive. As I have said before this is a small group but we are diversified and the input and work I have received from them has been of great value.

The January meeting will be held again at my house on Thursday the 15th.

VIEWPOINT

I hope you will enjoy our new FLAG.(FLAG - is a Newspaper word for the name at the top of the front page. In our case at the beginning of our Newsletter, in the middle of MIDI Magazine).

Support for Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine came in from all of BCAUG's officers and membership, three of whom (Tom Siemietkowski, Chuck Steele, and Todd Harris), meet at least once a month extra just to set the lay out and send it off to CHAOS.

This article is being typed on Dec. 2, and won't be read by Atari owners until January 1987.(That's a whole year after I wrote it, sigh !!).

The January meeting will be the most important night of the coming year. BCAUG's will ask for volunteers to hold office for the coming year. Officer duties are not easy, or always fun ones. But to have a great meeting, and a good group at the same time it is necessary, to have strong Leadership and Direction !!

At this time a year ago the group moved away from the set forum, almost costing the club to fall apart in a single year. With this next meeting, I feel we can regain the club's upward momentum and achieve on the goals that it has set.

All we need is, what we already have-- You !!

Please come to the January meeting, Thursday the 15th.

Todd Harris
a BCAUG's member

EXPIRATION NOTICE

Please check the last line on your mailing label for the expiration date of your membership dues.Two months after this date you will not get a newsletter because of the cost of the newsletter.

Disk Library

by Chuck Steele

I hope everyone is enjoying the December Disk of the Month. I want to thank Joe and Todd for their help in getting programs for the Disk.

This months disk will feature TAX HELPER 1986. This is an update of last years TAX HELPER. We will be giving out a new library listing with all the new and updated disks in the library.

As of this writing I'm still having some hardware problems which may effect the January Disk of the Month. Hope every thing is fixed and put back together by then.

BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:
MEMBERSHIP:
Thomas Siemietkowski 963-4475
LIBRARIAN:
SECRETARY:
Chuck Steele 964-1701
TREASURER:
Josephine Yeager 968-8401
NEWSLETTER:
Editor-Todd Harris 781-5963
Production-Dan Egan 962-2549
BBS/SYSOP
Richie Frye 965-0480

Review

Todd Harris BCAUG's Member

MERCENARY: A Flight Simulator Adventure

Ahoy Buckaroo, grab on tight as your going on an adventure. Ya see's you've just blasted off into a whole new world, a world of sound and mind. A world called Targ, and you control your own destiny.

Your name is the Mercenary.

As you may or may not know, the software market is a pretty dead place for an Atari user. I've spent a few hours drooling over the Commodore shelves. (about 50 to 65 percent of the inventory). Some of the smarter (because I own an Atari, not a Comme') software programs come Commodore/Atari !!!

Mercenary was found in the Comme' section at Toys'R'us (Battle Creek) store. But don't be misled, the Atari side includes both a 48K version and a 64K. The difference is in graphics. 64K game uses graphics mode 15, the 48K uses Gr. 7.

The game is played out using 3-D images, like the STAR WARS Arcade game, or Solid States. (A 3-D drawing, plotting program from Analog) This allows the over all scope of Mercenary to be BIG.

In a nut's shell it's a ...Flight Simulator-Text Adventure-without the Text-3D Plotter ..game. If you get too bored just shoot down one of the worlds site seeing wonders, or steal a ship. The maps are a must and the nice Atari Fuji sign was a great surprise. Datasoft, I think it's a good game, keep it up.

Atari Technical

LOVE AT FIRST BYTE
by Matt Howe (G.A.G.)

Welcome to this month's article on advanced BASIC programming. This month I am going to deviate from our normal programming routine and talk about some of the various versions of BASIC available for the 8-bit atari computer line. But first I want to put in a plug for my BBS, Love At First Byte (what else). It is up 24 hours and runs 300 or 1200 baud. There are not a lot of down loads but there are some interesting databases and I would like to see some programmers fill up the message bases with interesting and detailed explanations of the intricacies of the ATARI computer.

First let's talk about the old standby, ATARI BASIC, developed when the machine was first brought out. It was a compromise between what they wanted and what they could fit into the 8K cartridge. I think the three things I miss most are formatted prints and inputs and player/missle graphics support. Some of the other things that would have been nice would be a auto renumber, block line erasing, DOS commands and true disk I/O of numbers. Trace is also a handy feature for trouble shooting. After all that, the only thing more you could ask for is string arrays.

Well, let us look at the other versions of BASIC that I have had a chance to look at.

First we will look at an old favorite, BASIC XL/XE. The original BASIC XL, I have been told, was a re-write of the original version of the ATARI BASIC. Maybe, maybe not. But one thing is sure most of the features missing from ATARI BASIC are in BASIC XL. Thanks to the development of bank switching it still fits into 8K. Bank switching is the process by which one set of memory chips are switched out and another set are switched in. This allows the use of more memory without taking up more room.

Some of the features of BASIC XL are the missing print and input formatting and a really fine player/missle graphics interface. It supports the setup of P/M graphics including both player and missle shapes. It also contains routines for vertical movement including a command to read the joystick directly into the player or missle movement routine. In BASIC XL we also find our missing string arrays and an entire set of program development aids. Renumber, auto line numbering, real text error descriptions, block line erasing and my favorite, a trace function. Some of the other commands are byte and word (two bytes, 16-bits) handling and block memory moves. We will also find all of the DOS commands and a whole slew of new functions. These are the obvious things, but we also find a group of commands for handling decision making beyond the IF-THEN of ATARI BASIC. Besides the OR and AND we will find EOR (exclusive OR). We also find IF-THEN-ELSE situations and WHILE and ENDIF. These extra logic commands are great helps in speeding up the decision making process, a major reason programs are slow, which brings us to another feature of BASIC XL: the FAST command.

All these versions of BASIC are "interpreted BASIC" meaning that the computer interprets the program one line at a time into machine language and then executes that line, after which it goes and gets the next line to interpret. Each time it must GOTO a line the computer searches the line numbers until it finds the line it needs. (A hint here, if you have a routine that will be used a lot put it in the low line numbers the computer can find it faster.) The FAST command from BASIC XL precompiles the line numbers of the program to make them easier to find so it will run 2-3 times faster, regardless of where they are in the actual program text. I have not used BASIC XE, but it will harness the extra 64K of a 130 XE to allow MUCH larger programs than are possible in any other BASIC. Also, a whole new set of commands like SORTUP and SORTDOWN, new math routines, and more everything make BASIC XE uniquely powerful. BASIC XL and BASIC XE are available from OSS Precision Software. I have seen prices from 50-90 dollars for this product and it is in cartridge form.

The other version of BASIC I have had the pleasure to use is Turbo-BASIC. Turbo-BASIC is a public domain disk from Holland. There is an excellent English translation from the Western New York ATARI User Group now in circulation. It is the end result of work by Dave and Laura Yearke. I have not had a lot of time to experiment with Turbo-BASIC as I have only had a copy for a week but so far I am REAL impressed, particularly for the price. Turbo-BASIC is a disk based product and unfortunatly for some will only work on XL and XE ATARIs, as it uses the space behind the built in BASIC cartridge. Although Turbo-BASIC does not have the formatted and PRINT I would have liked to see, it more than makes up for that in the graphic commands it has. AND IT IS FAST!!! Without a FAST command or anything like it, it is nearly as fast as BASIC XE running full tilt, and is more compatible with programs written in "normal ATARI basic" than the OSS products. It also contains a command called PROC (let your imagination run wild!). We also find the extra decision making commands from BASIC XL, plus renumber, trace and block line deletes. We have the byte and word commands and the missing true number disk I/O. There are no P/M graphic handling, but let's return to my favorite aspect, the graphic commands. CIRCLE, yes it will draw circles with a single command. FILLTO replaces the old unruly XIO command. But I think my favorite is PAINT. PAINT will fill any object of any shape. The TEXT command inserts text directly onto a hi-res graphics screen!

This is just an overview of the major commands added to ATARI BASIC and does not include all the functions or the minor improvements and variations.

To wrap all this up, I recommend getting a copy of Turbo-BASIC, and if you want to do a lot of work in P/M graphics, get a copy of BASIC XL or BASIC XE. Both of these are invaluable to the BASIC programmer.

There is one feature I have not mentioned about Turbo-BASIC - it comes with a compiler. I am not going to talk about the compiler this month since we will compare some compilers in this column next month. If any of you programmers out there have experience with another version of BASIC leave me a message on my BBS and I will include it in next month's recap. Till then,

KEEP WITH THE PROGRAM

Atari News

The Pittsburg Atari Fair
by Jerry Cross (GAG)
contributing authors Norm Browne,
Mike Lechkun, Mike Clayton (MAGIC)

On November 22 and 23, the Pittsburg Atari Computer Enthusiest (PACE) held one of a series of Atari Fairs. These conventions are put on with the help of Atari, and are planned for several other cities (including Detroit) in the near future. As member's of the Taricon II (Detroit) committee, Mike Letchkun and myself attend this show.

Some of the dealers attending this show included Atari, Black Patch, Quantum Systems, Analog Magazine, Atari Explorer, Disk Publication (New Alladin), Michtron, Xlent software, Abacus software, Zobian Controls, Timeworks Software, Hybrid Arts, Shelbourne Software, Best Electronics, and several local Pittsburg merchants. Also included were several area Atari computer clubs, including GAG (Flint, MI) and MAGIC (Detroit, MI).

Atari had the spotlight of the show, although they showed nothing really new. The Atari booth consisted of 7 XEs and 7 STs which were running a variety of programs. Two STs side by side ran the flying bird demo, one equipped with a blitter chip and one without. One ST was running on a color monitor with a built-in 3.5 single side floppy (that's one half of the rumored STI, the integrated system ST with a detached keyboard!). The 80 column card was running on an amber screen NEC monitor. There were 8 bits running Star Raiders and Planetarium and Atari Writer. There was a word processor displayed on an ST and a game called Phantasia which had incredible sound comparable to sound from a radio or tape player.

Sandy Austin, Neil Harris, Mark Jansen and Jerry Gee manned the Atari booth. It seemed to me that they were generally unavailable to be questioned. Also, there were a lot of people that wanted to complain to them, including one irate person who had come equipped with a permit from the city to picket the show. It seems the fellow was disatisfied with service he had received from Atari and plans to picket all shows east of the Mississippi.

Almost as soon as we arrived at the show, Neil Harris of Atari customer relations spoke about Atari's plans for the year to come and fielded questions from the audience. Neil started out with the now customary assurance that Atari is not abandoning the 8 bit line but is developing new products for it. No satisfactory answers were given as to when these would be available or why it has taken so long for some products.

Neil also stated that the 3.5 inch floppy for the 8 bit is ready to go but no introduction date has been set. Generally all of his comments were optomistic but vague, especially regarding timing of new releases.

RUMORS AND WISHWARE

At the Saturday evening hospitality get-together back at the hotel there was mentioned the possibility of Atari's announcing a 520F which would have its self contained floppy like a 1040 does only single sided. It was also rumored (by an unnamed source ah-la Washington D.C.) that Atari had dumped most of its old 520s and single sided drives to Toys 'R Us and that they would likely be sold at $269.95 for CPU and disk drive. Both of these were denied Sunday when directed to Mark Jansen of Atari technical support. But then, he generally denied and disclaimed everything. Another rumor going around was that the SC3000 monitor would not be distributed, but Sandy Austin said that it would be sold. That's the one with the built-in drive.

WHAT'S NEW?!?

Quantum Systems had 5 new ST programs including a BBS, a terminal, a print utility, a MYDOS shell, and a cartridge containing 16 desk accessories and a battery powered realtime clock. ($99 retail-$79 at the show) This looks like a real winner!

XLENT software had a new 8 bit word processor which seemed to have just about the same features as Atariwriter except that it could use graphics and had a unique 80 column print preview. When activate, you see a "printhead" printing out your letter. The text is very hard to read, but it gives you an idea of what it will look like in a formated way. This program is not compatable with any of the 80 column cards currently available.

Disk Publications announced that in addition to their continuing to publish their 8 bit New Alladin, they will release an ST version of the magazine in December. It will be a two disk set.

Analog magazine announced that their February issue will be their 13th monthly issue and will be an all 8 bit issue!!! Just like the good old days.

David Ahl, formally of Creative Computing, assured his audience that the new Atari Explorer would be published on schedule. He referred to an interesting survey they took which showed that 60% of their audience had STs while 70% had 8 bits, and 40% had both. Explorers coverage will be approximately 50-50. Our own Mike Clayton subscribed and paid cash without getting a receipt. Now that's confidence!

Zobian software demonstrated and explained their analog and digital rats. Their first rat announced nearly a year ago was analog and functioned just like two paddle controllers. The new digital rat it much faster, smoother and has greater resolution capability. It is being sold with RAOS, a new disk operating environment which is supposed to emulate GEM. It was not finished but did not look bad. A graphics 8 drawing program was being packaged with it and the mouse was quick and accurate and a pleasure to use to draw with. RAOS was $49.95 by itself, $99.95 with the digital rat, and the rat and drawing program were $69.95. RAOS occupied 3K of memory and is relocatable and the menu loads from disk and works just like DUP.SYS and is the same size. We had mixed feelings about this product. I liked the looks of the program and hardware, but we felt it was overpriced. If you have a need for a mouse though, this is for you.

MycroFlyte displayed special flight simulator joysticks($59.95), a bit pricey but a must for a true flight simulator fanatic. This joystick has several independant buttons and controls. Instead of going to the keyboard to enter commands, all controlls are now conviently on the joystick. There are 2 versions, one for 8-bit and a deluxe version for the ST.

Timeworks displayed and integrated set of business programs for the ST including a Word Processor, a Database Manager, a spreadsheet and an Accounting program. An unusual feature of these is that the database includes presentation graphics much the same as Lotus or VIP which are spreadsheets. Prices are list $79.95 but representative said they can usually be found for $49.95.

Abacus software had books on any topic pertaining to the ST that you could imagine as well as a Database manager and a word processor. They also announced 3 new products coming out soon. One is a new book "ST For Beginners". I can't wait for that one.

Alpha systems had two new items. Graphics transformer makes Printshop icons out of Koala Pad, Touch Tablet, tereyes, Printshop, Magniprint II, Graphics Master, StripPoker, Atari Graphic light pen, and others. Compatible with all and switches back and forth from one to another. Also demonstrated was color computereyes! Very impressive! Degas and Neochrome compatible but expensive at $199.95.

There were lots of new items for both ST and 8 bit lines. We were disappointed that ICD and OSS were not in attendance especially as ICD seems to have perhaps the most innovative products out right now for the 8 bit line. ICDs MIO box was demonstrated at the GAG-MAGIC booth and it is a remarkable device. (Your'e welcome, ICD! Wish you were here!)

All of us found the show extremely enjoyable and feel that PACE did a great job of organization and showed the way to put on a successful show. We can only hope and work toward the show in our area being as good.

I also got a lot of new ideas that we will add to the Taricon show in Detroit. This show is scheduled for late August of 1987, and will be held at the Southfield Civic Center. We also plan to attend shows in Buffalo and Chicago. If you wish to attend or want more information, give me a call. Stop by our booth and say hi!

Reviews

PANASONIC KX-P1080i PRINTER REVIEW
by Marty Schmidt

The PANASONIC KX-P1080i is an Epson compatible printer featuring near letter quality and IBM compatibility. It is identical with the KX-P1080 except for the addition of IBM graphics modes and 120 characters/second speed rather than 100. The programs I have which use the graphics mode all work properly in Epson mode. Strangely, Print Shop works using the Epson mode but not Panasonic's own 1090-1091. I haven't timed the printer, but it is about as fast as the Prowriter I used to have. I believe it had the 120 CPS rating.

It prints bidirectionally with full logic seek, that is it speeds to the first word on a line. This printer is also much quieter than the Prowriter.

The big news, however, is near letter quality. This is the main reason I replaced my Prowriter. Most of the new generation dot matrix printers have a near letter quality mode, but this Panasonic will print near letter quality in any of it's print pitches, (10,12 15 or 17 CPI), including proportional and italics. You may also print any pitch double wide and still get near letter quality. The near letter quality is generated in two passes of the print head, just like most other printers. The quality is very good. I compared it with Panasonic's 1092, which is a more expensive, faster printer which lacks the versatility of the 1080i. The 1092 print is superior, with a finer formed character. However, the difference is not readily apparent unless you compare the two side by side. Taken on it's own the 1080i near letter quality print is very good.

The 1080i will right justify text by itself, without help from a word processor. It does this by making the spaces between words even, not by adding whole spaces, but by adding one

dot width or more as required. This even works when printing in proportional mode. I know of no other printer having this ability.
I have seen many printers in use with their top covers removed. People leave them off because the covers are not convenient to use. The top cover on my 1080i is easy to remove and replace, once I trimmed off the four small raised areas on the sides. It now stays on except when I'm installing paper or labels.

The tractor feed, included as standard equipment, is located after the print head, so you lose one sheet of paper when starting at the top of form. The Prowriter had it's tractor before the print head, but I had to use 20 lb. paper or risk paper jamming. All things considered, I prefer the way the Panasonic is designed. It's friction feed is excellent, and I have found that I can use friction feed until the paper gets to the tractors, then engage the holes and switch to tractor feed. It sounds like a lot more trouble than it really is. If I weren't so cheap I'd just waste the one sheet and forget about it.

Cartridge ribbons are used in the 1080i. They are small, but I've only had the printer for a month, so I have no idea how long they last. There is a hole on the back that you push in when the print starts to get light. This is supposed to give about another 50 per cent of life to the ribbon.

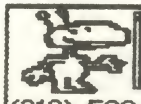
Unlike the older Gemini printers, you may turn the platen knob forward or backward with the power switched on. I always regarded that a hassle on the Gemini printers.

Included on the top is a switch to put the printer in standard, near letter quality, or compressed mode. You can print your document in draft mode, which is faster and easier on the ribbon, then proofread it and print the final version in near letter quality mode without having to enter printer codes into the text. Very handy.

The documentation supplied with the Panasonic is very good. Gemini documentation has always been one of the best, and I think the 1080i manual compares well with the Gemini manuals. It isn't as thick as the Gemini's, but everything is covered in detail.

After reading this review over, I realized there aren't enough negative comments about the Panasonic 1080i. I can't come up with anything to criticize. Not even the price. I bought it mail order for $199.00 plus shipping.

This printer has my highest endorsement. It is hard to beat at any price, and it's $199.00 price qualifies it as a steal. If you're looking for a printer, buy this one. You won't be sorry.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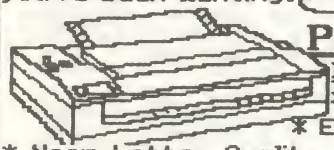
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Review

REVIEW: MIO Board by ICD
by Jerry Cross (GAG)

Several months ago, I had the chance to attend the Summer Consumer Electronics Show. I happened to get there early, and had planned to scan the products in the computer area before going on to other more important displays like the X-rated video section next door.

Not much was happening at the time, and I stumbled across a small booth inside of the huge ATARI area with a guy from ICD standing there. Sitting on his cramped table was a small box connected to an Atari XE. The ICD man said it was their new product, a combination of all the things us Atari folks have been looking for. It was called the MIO (Multi-Input/Output) board.

To many of you, the MIO may be old news... despite the fact that they have only in the last month or so been actually available. Nevertheless, To bring the few of you up to speed: the MIO is one incredable package-

It has an RS-232 port for your modems or other serial perifials, and uses the same set-up as the P:R: Connection, only a bit improved. Also included is a printer port, and a plug for an as yet unavailable 80-column board.

It also has a hard drive interface that works with any SCSI/SASI protocal hard drive. The hard drive must have it's own controller card for it to work. According to Supra, their hard drive should work just fine.

The MIO also has a built-in ramdisk. There are two sizes, 256k or 1Meg. The entire ramdisk area is configurable- you can divide it up into several different size drives from 32k to 960k, or just make one large ramdisk. The software even allows you to configure the MIO to boot right from the ramdisk instead of a floppy.

You can configure a print spooler (a buffer to collect your printing data and release your computer to do other things while it prints) to whatever size you want (up to 256k).

The MIO plugs into your computer using the parallel plug located in the back. This allows for super fast disk access and still allows you to hook up other drives too. If you are using an XE computer, you must purchase an adapter (about $20) since the XE uses the cartridge port as part of its expansion port.

Well, I was sold even at the CES! I eventually tore myself away from the ICD display to check out the video section, but a few months later, I finally got my 1-meg MIO board and ran it through the tests. The first thing I noticed was the excellent documentation that comes with it. If you are new to computers, this takes you through all you need to know with few headaches. More experienced users will not even need to look at the docs. The built in software is menu driven and very user friendly.

The software resides on an EPROM inside the MIO. So what? Well, ICD had taken some of it's past experiences into consideration and has set up a plan to exchange future software modifications for only a token fee. The EPROM can be easily removed and replaced. Simply send ICD $15 and they will send you the new EPROM. When you return the old chip ICD will return $5 to you. This way you don't have to go without your MIO while your chips are in the mail, and the end cost is $10.

Since the software is resident in the MIO, it takes no memory in the computer. Once configured, it stays in memory within the MIO. Also, the MIO comes with it's own power source. You can turn off your computer and the ramdisk stays intact.

About the only thing I don't like about the MIO is the very short cable. It is only about 3 inches to prevent interference, and the MIO must sit directly behind the computer. The footprint is about the size of a disk drive, but is only 1 inch high. If you have a cramped working space, this will really cause a problem. Also, because of the heat generated by the board, you can not set anything on top of it or you will cause some problems with the ventilation.

Another bad mark goes for the lack of the addition of Sparta-Dos. The first thing you read in the manual is they strongly recommend the use of Sparta-Dos with the MIO. Most DOS's do not support such large amounts of memory, and others I have tested acted funny. So why can't they throw in a copy for free? Remember all of those US Doublers, Ramdo's, and R-Time cartridges you purchased that came with Sparta-Dos? If you do not already have a copy of Sparta-Dos, expect to order one right away, and at a cost of around $40.

The modem port has an improved version of the P:R: software. Some of the bugs that prevented you from using certain terminal programs have been fixed, and will now run without modification. Some of the programs tested include Hometerm, Express, R-Scope, Omniterm, and Backtalk.

The MIO also responds to the XIO configuration commands, so you can control all the ports or change configurations from basic.

The documentation does a very good job in describing the interface, and lists a number of hard drives by manufacturers that are compatable with the MIO. As mentioned earlier, you must have a controller built in to the drive or you will have to supply one.

Some hard drives have controllers built in and can be recognized by a 50 pin SASI/SCSI interface on the drive itself. Most commonly found hard drive do NOT have controllers built in. These drives are characterized by a 34 pin and 20 pin edge connector. In order to operate this class of drives, you need a SASI or SCSI interface controller card (NOT an IBM compatable type!). These controllers have a 34 pin edge connecter and several dual rows of 10 pins on one side and a 50 pin SASI/SCSI connector on the other end. Tom Harker at ICD said in a phone conversation in mid-November that they would sell a SASI controller through ICD since many people have asked for them after failing to find them available locally. He expects to have them by the time you read this for around $135.

The MIO can be updated to allow the networking of hard drives. This will allow up to 8 MIOs and 8 hard drives to be connected along the same cable and communicate with the same drive concurrently. This enables several systems to share the same programs and data. The cost for this upgrade is $50.

Pretty neat, huh? I wouldn't part with mine for anything! Who thought of this in the first place? Well, highly informed sources claim that Jimmy Rambo had just finished a new 1-meg ramcard and went running down the hallway to the marketing department. Meanwhile, another inventer had just finished modifing the P:R: Connection to run a harddisk drive, and raced out of his office, crashing into Rambo.

"Hey" cried Rambo, "You got your interface stuck in my ramdisk!"

"NO! You got your ramdisk stuck in my interface" shouted the technicion.

There was a long pause, then they both dashed back to their offices to create the MIO!

And the rest is history.....

Support your ATARI Clubs!! Attend the monthly meetings, Take part in the projects, and your use and enjoyment of your ATARI will grow with your knowlege and experience! GREAT CLUBS are part of what makes POWER without the PRICE more than just another motto!

Review

WIZARD'S CROWN
SSI Atari 800/XL/XE $39.95
Reviewed by Thomas Warren

If you like playing Fantasy games like Dungeons and Dragons (tm), you'll like Wizard's Crown from SSI. It's part tactical battle and an adventure game, with lots of control over a party of eight players. The game is large in scope (I never did get very far outside the city walls), with nice graphics. Wizard's Crown is like most other games from SSI, using keyboard commands instead of a joystick.

The game play is more intricate than in normal computer games involving a party. You can assign one character to be a point man from 0-8 movement squares from the rest of the party. The battles (there's lots of them) can be performed in two ways, one is to let the computer do everything, which is fast, and two go to a tactical battle map and do everything yourself. Although the second way takes longer, I prefered it. Seeing an adversary lying on the ground stunned or dead is much more life-like that just words.

During a battle, players give or receive either light or serious wounds, or light or heavy bleeding which can change the outcome of battle. A player can also be stunned, rendering him/her incapable of fighting. One nice feature, assuming you've survived, is healing which can be performed by players with Karma. They can heal light, heal all serious wounds, heal all light or heavy bleeding, to one or more players until their Karma is depleted. Karma can be replenished by praying a one of the various temples found in the game.

SSI was gratious enough to provide eight players already to go, so you don't have to make your own. A nice touch, and a good way to learn the game, although the documentation is a must, and nicely done.

The one major fault I found was the creating of the game disks. Three are needed for play, and they have to be done at the same time. One one drive this takes a long time. The game provides for the use of two drives which would help. The creating routine is like the Dup Disk in DOS, which I would have preferred, but you can't have everything.

I recommend this game if you are really into Dungeons and Dragons as a board game. If you are just a casual player, it might be too intricate. It's well worth the price of $39.95.

Last Hacks

How Big is a Bit?
by Brian Goluska (CHAOS)

A fellow worker and I were trying to make two computers from different manufacturers talk to each other over serial ports. (If you want to know how easy this is, try wiring your car radio controls to your microwave oven). After several unsuccessful hours of work, we decided that there was a timing problem between the two machines, and we stepped back to consider every aspect of the problem.

Serial ASCII characters are often defined with a picture, showing how they are transmitted serially, out a serial port or over a communications line, like a telephone line. This picture often looks like this:

Representing a start bit, eight data bits, and a stop bit. Or, depending on the language being sent, maybe a start bit, seven data bits, a parity bit, and one or two stop bits.

We started calculating what was happening. We were directly connecting the two computers, so the signal was moving at roughly the speed of electricity, 186,000 miles per second. At 9600 baud, in our case 9600 bits per second, a character takes roughly a millisecond. 186,000 miles divided by 9600 bits means that each bit is 19.4 miles long. Since we only had 50 feet of wire between the machines, no wonder we had a problem!

At other baud rates, serial bits get even bigger. At 1200 bits per second, each bit is about 155 miles long. At 300 bits per second, a bit reaches 620 miles!

I can only conclude that serial communication is theoretically impossible over short distances. With a 300 baud modem, only locations more than 620 miles away can be called successfully. A 1200 baud modem allows calls as close as 155 miles. This explains why people are willing to pay high prices for faster and faster modems.

EXPLANATION APPROACH #1 (FUN):
We all know that it IS possible to call friends and Bulletin Boards within the same city and still have our modems work. This is because 94% of all telephone routing is now done by sattilite, which are orbiting the Earth at a sufficient distance to allow baud rates as low as 110. Occasionally, your phone call will be switched directly (through some foul-up at the phone company). These are the times you experience trouble getting your modem to respond properly. Hang up and redial.

EXPLANATION APPROACH #2 (NO FUN):
While the above is mathematically correct, and plausible, we know that modems work when connected serially a few feet away. The chips that send and receive only sense sudden changes in voltage, and it is the timing between the edge of each change that carries the information. So the receiving chip gets an edge for the start bit, and begins its timing. Subsequent edges are interpreted as the beginning of subsequent bits only if they change from 1 to 0 or 0 to 1. So there is no need for the "bit" to exist all at one time on a wire too short to physically accomodate its length.

WHEN IS A BIT NOT A BIT?

In closing, there is also the mystery of the stop bit (or bits- many terminal programs ask "1 or 2 stop bits?"). The stop bit is merely an idle line for 1 bit length, so if the last valid data bit is equal to the stop bit, there is no need to send a stop bit. Some receivers even assume a stop bit is received if the line is idle for 1/2 of a bit length. If the stop bit can't be distinguished from an idle line, does the stop bit exist? In fact, the stop bit can only exist if it is NOT there. If the first stop bit isn't there, what about the second stop bit? Is it, too, only there if it isn't there, and how can you tell if it's the second one or the first one thats not there? Be sure to read my upcoming book, "The Second Stop Bit and Bigfoot, a Rational Approach to the Evidence".

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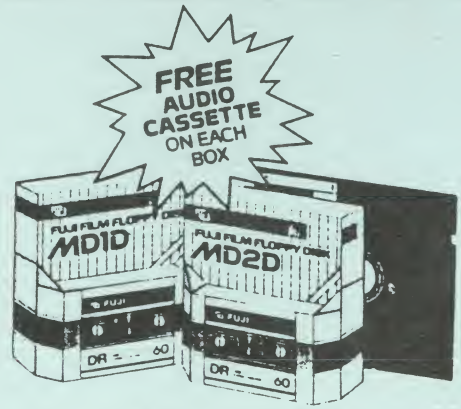

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Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

The BIGGEST NEWS this month is ATARI's announcements of a whole new redesigned ST line, a laser printer, and an IBM COMPATIBLE computer... See all the details inside, as we recap the excitement of the WINTER CUNSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW from LAS VEGAS.

ATARI STOCK WATCH: Nearly three months after the introduction of 4.5 million shares of common stock (all sold on the FIRST DAY of release at about $11.50), ATARI stock is over $20 a share. Trading has been heavy in the AMERICAN STOCK EXCHANGE, typically around 100,000 shares trading per day. The announcements at the LAS VEGAS CES of the new products gave the stock a spurt of action that took it over $20 from the $16-$18 it had been for a few weeks. That's nearly doubling in a quarter year! Have you picked a color for your new Mercedes yet?

GRAND RAPIDS joins MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE; MID-MICHIGAN MAGAZINE to undergo changes; read about them in the PUBLISHERS PAGE.

ANTIC ONLINE (an electronic news service that was/was not/is presented as part of COMPUSERVE INFORMATION SERVICES) apparently resolved its differences with CIS. It is back after an announcement this fall that it was leaving the service. There is a "new look" and promises of more and better features to come, all on CIS. No explanation has been circulated as to what the flap was all about. Many ATARI club newsletters rely heavily on ANTIC ONLINE for information, and are happy to see things patched up.

PC PURSUIT (a service that allows unlimited night calling to long distance BBS's for $25 flat rate per month) has just added 11 more area codes, bringing their coverage for calling to 25 major areas, 42% of the country. There are plans to add more during 1987. Although Michigan's 313 area code IS included and the 517 and 616 ARE NOT included, most parts of Michigan CAN get the service to call INTO the other areas. For more information, call PC PURSUIT at (800) 368-4215.

Meanwhile, our government is considering re-regulation of "packet telecommunication services" that, if approved, may make services like COMPUSERVE and particularly PC PURSUIT too expensive to operate. Now under consideration are proposals that would let the formerly BELL companies charge service rates to competitors for packet service (that's the computer communication circuits) instead of the free access they are now required to provide. The current system was devised to encourage competition and lower rates; the "big guys" want to reverse this to restructure their profit ratios. The additional charges could be around $4.00 an hour by some estimates... and DOUBLE that for PC PURSUIT (since it has TWO accesses per call, one at each end of the long-distance link). You can still tell your representatives what you think... do it NOW since this proposal looks like it may be passed in FEBRUARY! Write to: Honorable Mark Fowler, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Washington D.C. 20554. Refer to "Computer Inquiry III" in your letters. State clearly, in your own words, that competitive packet switching services should not be reregulated or subjected to carrier access charges, and then explain why not. If this proposal passes, prepare to give up telecommunications services and cheap long distance access.

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for $12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

C.H.A.O.S.
Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

WE NEED ADS!!!

Rich Barnes

PUBLISHERS PAGE
JOHN NAGY, C.H.A.O.S.
(517) 487-3646

This is the FINAL ISSUE of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!!!!

Don't panic. March 1987 will bring the FIRST issue of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE... a subtle but important change. Another change will be (I HOPE!!!) increased size and a cover price of $1.50. There are no current plans to change the costs to the clubs.

MUTLTIPLE CHOICE: IN THIS PICTURE, THE MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE EDITOR IS HAVING IT EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT:

1. He can't call after 10 PM.
2. There are too many CLUB pages.
3. There's not enough CLUB pages.
4. There are not enough technical articles.
5. There are not enough beginner articles.
6. There are too many 8-bit articles.
7. There are too many ST articles.
8. The deadline is too early.
9. The delivery date is too late.
10. He cut an article he shouldn't have.
11. He ran an article he shouldn't have.
12. Even as a volunteer, he overcharges.
13. ALL OF THE ABOVE.

I hope to arrange some kind of conference for all the contributing clubs in the near future to sound out what you all want from the MAGAZINE. The more I talk to many club leaders, the more I am amazed at the very differnet perspectives and expectations they all have. Maybe if we got together we could see each others needs more clearly... and maybe our own, too. With any endevor of this size, there are always problems. I really don't mind hearing complaints about what went in, what didn't go in, what came late, etc., because thats how we find out what to do next... But SO MANY comments are in direct contradiction with each other!

Things are actually going fairly well, and even the complaints I get (dramatized in the cartoon above) are usually coupled with compliments in general. We ARE trying to satisfy you. Our enjoyment of the project (and therefore, our committment) depends on it!

Next month we will also be welcoming our EIGHTH club, as GRAND RAPIDS joins us and swells our subscriber circulation to well over 700. This addition may be the last for a while, as the size and costs of the magazine continue to climb out of reach. We MAY add some smaller clubs and allow them each a single column for local information and contact people... or just encourage group rate subscriptions. What do YOU think is best?

As we have grown, the "MID" just seemed to get in the way. Rich Barnes is now asking when we plan to add clubs in INDIANA and OHIO (we in fact got a few of those requests!). I just ask him how "WESTERN HEMISPHERE ATARI MAGAZINE" stikes him...

The next major accomplishments I hope for are stabilizing our advertising, then going after significant out-of-area subscriptions as well as counter sales.

What's on YOUR mind? Lets get together on it SOON!

Rumors

EXPRESS! 1030 version 3.0 will not be released. Before you panic, it's only because author of the increadibly popular public domain terminal software, KEITH LEDBETTER, plans to go directly to version 3.1. The entire line of EXPRESS! programs (for the 850 type HAYES, the 1030/XM301, and the MPP) were to be configured the same for a new version #3.0. The one for the 850 was released in the early fall, to be followed in short order by the 1030 and MPP versions. However, Keith decided to included improved XMODEM and YMODEM routines and call it 3.1, since the DOC for 3.0 was already released. There have been some delays, but expect the new versions at almost any time.

It seems the SUPRA hard drives for the ST are out selling the ATARI brand hard drives by quite a margin. It may be more marketing and cosmetics than price or performance. The SUPRA is based on a 3 1/2" drive, considerably smaller than the ATARI 5 1/4" unit. Another reason may be that SUPRA has had much more advertising.

Speaking of SUPRA ADVERTISING, we have seen full page ads for their ST HARD DRIVE in MANY club newsletters around the country. MANY. Yet when we have called them about advertising with MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, they have REPEATEDLY told our reps that "Oh, we DON'T PAY for those, the clubs just run them for their information value." Is this an outright lie?? When pinned on specifics, they back down a bit- "CURRENT NOTES? Oh yeah, we DID advertise there... but that's the only one..." Let me name a dozen others. Or, better, let me name some one who is sure NOT to believe anything else we hear from SUPRA...

ATARI ST COLOR MONITORS are not all created equal. There are at least two distinctly different versions by different manufacturers, and maybe more. And the picture quality is not equal either. It seems the OLDER monitors are noticably sharper. BE AWARE of what you get! Shop around.

THUNDER!, a terriffic word processor accessory for spell checking and more, will NOT WORK with 1ST WORD... sorta. Actually, it will not work in the ACCESSORY mode with REFORMATTED 1ST WORD files, since the extra spaces the formatiing puts in the file mess up THUNDER!'s operation. So, use it in GEM mode, and it should perform fine.

DISK DRIVE PROBLEMS have been reported on the internal drive in the 1040 ST. Although ATARI only rates their drive for 80 sectors, most drives are CAPABLE of accessing more. VIP and other programs force the drive to go beyond the 80th sector, and SOME machines just can't do it. ATARI says it's not their problem, since they published the specs. VIP says get a different drive. Cute.

At the other end of the spectrum: ATARI showed a new CASSETTE drive at the CES... YIKE. Actually, tape is POPULAR overseas, where the cost of a disk system is much higher than stateside. One company offers an upgrade called "RAMBIT" (sound familiar?) that is actually for increasing the tape data transfer rate from the normal 600 baud up to 3600 baud. IMAGINE! Tape loads of worthwile sized programs in well under fifteen minutes! It costs 18 pounds.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud. (ATASCII/ASCII)

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-3590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

Here it is February already. We're in the midst of the weather that keeps us inside at our keyboards doing all kinds of constructive things. Like learning a new programming language, or a new database, or a new adventure. You don't have cabin fever if you have an Atari!!

Things continue to improve within the club. New additions are being made to the public domain libraries (both 8 and 16 bit). The same is true of the publications library. We are taking steps to broaden our resource material so that we will have more ST related publications. And the newsletter continues to grow and improve. Of course, all of these things are opportunities for you to get involved and help out. For instance, we need an ST owner/member to help out by taking responsibility for the ST portion of the publications library. Ideally, the ST specific books and magazines, and the more general materials that relate to both 8 and 16 bit, will be at the ST meeting. So step forward and volunteer.

ST

JANUARY ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

Fifteen ST users braved the snowstorm to attend the January meeting. Since last meeting we learned how to use the overhead viewing system, so that the ST video could be displayed on the dozens of overhead TV sets. Quality is noticeably less than a color monitor, but the ease of viewing from anywhere in the room is nice. A VCR, 2 standard Atari to TV boxes, and several other cables were required make the connection. We are still going to try to find a simpler cabling method.

Mark Smathers had his upgraded 520 ST (1 Meg), and he demonstrated CRYSTAL (from Antic) and MICRO MANAGER (from Blue Moon products). Both of these commercial products are productivity tools. For instance, among other functions, CRYSTAL allows a disk to be formatted without going back to the desktop. This is a boon to anyone who has ever been in the middle of a long article or drawing, and realized that they had no formatted disks ready to do a save. MACRO MANAGER allows functions like index card files (maybe for a phone list), calculation, and notepad. As always, Mark takes great care in setting up his ST working environment, making best use of ramdisks and desk accessories to automate desktop housekeeping.

John Johnson showed TWO ON TWO BASKETBALL (Gamestar), and Chet Kapusinski drove the spy's car in MAJOR MOTION (Michtron). Along with the demos, discussion continued on mail order vendors, prices, bulletin boards and modems. Atari's CES announcements are exciting (I want 4 Meg!), but they're covered elsewhere in this magazine.

This months tech tip from the meeting concerns hardware:

Andy Behm said he was having problems transferring files from his 8-bit Atari to an IBM PC, using a serial cable. This should work using pin 2 to pin 3, pin 3 to pin 2, and pin 7 in the cable, and tying pins 6, 8, and 20 at the IBM end of the cable. A similar cable will work for the IBM to the ST, or between 2 ST's (for 2 ST's you don't need to tie 6, 8, and 20, just cross 2 and 3 and use 7 straight to 7).

If you're using the Atari 850 interface to connect an Atari 8-bit to an ST, make sure to use the first 9 pin connector, the one farthest from the printer connection. The other 850 ports require extra pins. From the 850 9 pin connector, use pin 3 to pin 3 of the ST connector, pin 4 to pin 2, and pin 5 to pin 7. So the 850 side uses 3, 4, 5, to pins 3, 2, 7 of the ST side.

Disk Library

By John Baker

Forty three zillion and twenty five. That's how many people showed up for the December meeting. The half-price disk sale was a HUGE success with thousands of regular library and $1.00 special Christmas disks being snapped up.

All kidding aside, the library sales have been an integral part of the ongoing project to offer more benefits to our members. The $12.00 yearly membership fee basically handles the newsletter costs and miscellaneous expenses. The bulk of the clubs operating revenue is generated by library sales, and hardware/software sales. The club's library equipment (computer, drive, etc.) and BBS equipment (hardware, software, phone bill, etc.) are all paid with income from these sales.

Now I guess it's time for a little library news. We will be getting the new library listing to you as soon as possible. It appears that they will be mailed out separately instead of being inserted in the newsletter. The listing gets bigger at each printing, and it's a just a few pages shy of the size of a Sears catalog.

Several changes were made from the previous listing to better facillitate library sections. First, Koala Pics and AMS Music files are in separate sections. Print Shop Icon disks are also separate. We are up to 5 icon disks now with another one in the works. Graphic demos and sound/music demos are listed only by name and sector count. This will prove to be much more meaningful. Some disks were dropped or replaced by other disks, while some disk numbers were switched around to work with our new system. Also our complete selection of Analog and Antic disks are fully listed by month/year and sectors. Previous Disks of the Month, as well as Bonus or Feature disks are also listed. I think you will find this the complete, and comprehensive listing available.

We also want to start encouraging more help and cooperation between corresponding jobs in both groups, such as the Disk Libraries and the Publications Library. Coordination and cooperation will serve everyone as we continue to grow.

Another bit of club business to discuss is the upcoming election of officers. The March 8-Bit meeting is the date of the Annual Meeting of CHAOS wherein we elect officers for the coming year. It is important to be there so that your feelings may be made known and your vote recorded. The ST owners will elect their Member-at-Large at their March meeting. The 8-Bit Member-at-Large, as well as the rest of the officers, will be elected at the March 8-Bit meeting. Of course, it will likely be the other way around next year if the ST membership continues to grow as it has been. See you there!!!

8 EIGHT IS ENOUGH

8-Bit Minutes

By John Nagy (since Gary Ferris thought it was more important to go to work than to come to the meeting.... Twice now! Talk about priorities! SHEESH!)

About 65 people came to the CHAOS 8-bit meeting on Saturday, January 17. Many new and renewal members were signed up. Discussion was hot and long about the new machines ATARI announced at the Las Vegas CES, while a new disk showing CPR and other first aid methods was shown above. (The news was very exciting but no one needed rescusitation.) Also discussed were the pitfalls and benefits of MAIL ORDER.

John Baker showed the DISK OF THE MONTH, one he shamelessly prepared WEEKS before the meeting... depriving the audience from the ADVENTURE of wondering if it would be completed before the half-time break. He later also gave a very complete demo of the outstanding game "DANDY", which plays almost exactly like the recent arcade hit "SCORCERER" but predates it. "DANDY" will let up to four people play simultaneously in team or free-for-all action. It was included as a BONUS DISK OF THE MONTH for subscribers, and is available now in the CHAOS Library.

Richard Evans did a review and demo of the old word processing favorite of many, LETTER PERFECT, and showed what the ACE-80 cartridge could do to make a true 80 column display for use with it.

I demonstrated the COVOX VOICEMASTER, a device to allow digital sound recording and playback on the 8-bit ATARI. It also is capable of voice RECOGNITION and can be easily programmed in BASIC. It sparked a lot of imaginations as it played a demo no-hands game of blackjack, speaking back to me in response to my verbal bets. (I lost as usual... at least it didn't digitally laugh at me.)

Program co-ordinator Guy Hurt announced that he will have a special "audience participation" contest at the next meeting, Saturday, February 21, at 10 A.M. Don't miss it!

Telecom

THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By John Nagy

No, the hard drive is NOT online yet. But it IS sitting on my desk... As I write, I have not yet received the MIO box from ICD Corp.... but they say anyday now.

There HAVE been lots of new additions to the CHAOS BBS software though... like a counter in each message that tells you how may times it has been read completely, whether it is a reply and to what message, and whether there are replies to the message you are reading. You can also now see who the last several callers were and what they had to say. In just a bit, you will also see where they called from.

I have tried to adapt and include the best features of every BBS system I have seen into CHAOS. More are on the way.

Here's a tip that is seldom used but often handy: you can DELETE the message you are reading and REPLY to it in ONE STEP by entering "D;R" when you are at the bottom of the message.

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT! Call us 24 hours a day at (517) 371-1106.

Support your ATARI Clubs!! Attend the monthly meetings, Take part in the projects, and your use and enjoyment of your ATARI will grow with your knowlege and experience! GREAT CLUBS are part of what makes POWER without the PRICE more than just another motto!

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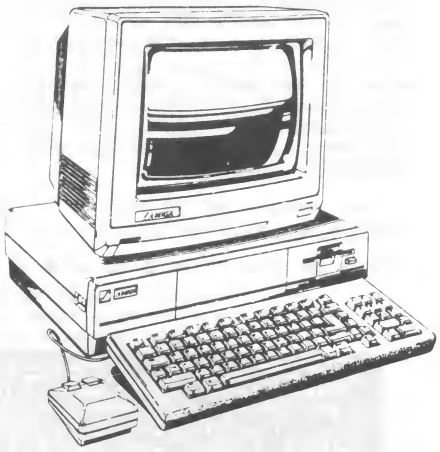
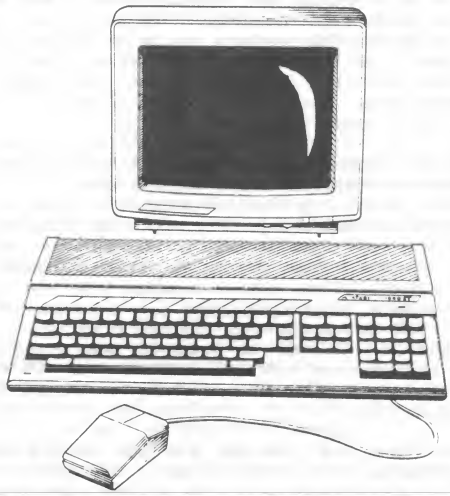




WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING:
FEBRUARY 10 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting minutes

REPORT ON 1/13/87 MEETING
BY MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by Mike Pieronek while the "China Dolls" demo was being displayed on an ST. The first several minutes were spent fielding comments on our involvement with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Response from the membership was overwhelmingly favorable with the possible exception of one member who did not receive his copy.

Craig Harvey discussed and demonstrated the Modula II programming language for the ST and commented that a large Ramdisk is helpful during the compiling routine. This makes it more attractive for use in the 1 meg machine vs. the 520K ST. Craig discussed his adventures in installing the "EasieST" 1 meg upgrade. It can be ordered for $185 and, for an additional $15, will come with sockets that will allow future upgrades to 4 megabytes. He indicated he has very little experience in such projects and had completed it in about 45 minutes. No soldering was required and the documentation was very good. He also noted that it failed completely in less than 2 days, causing his Clear Thinking BBS to crash and that the EasieST upgrade is now in-transit, being returned to the manufacturer.

Bob Carlini discussed the ".Arc" file-compression program. He noted the newer version is menu driven and is a massive improvement over the original IBM version. Bob demonstrated "Puzzler" from Compute, which will scramble a graphic screen into 100 segments and the user attempts to reassemble it. It has 3 levels: Easy ("Hard"), Medium ("Very Hard"), and Hard ("Impossible"). Bob also showed the "Shiny Bubbles" ST demo which got its usual round of oohs and ahhs. There were also demonstrations of "Shanghai" and "Flight Simulator" for the ST by Pete Lambeck.

Fred Kandah passed around copies of several press releases regarding Atari's involvement in the recent CES Expo in Las Vegas. The big news is the release of the Atari laser printer, the 1200 baud modem, the soon-to-be released Atari PC and the MEGA ST with detached keyboard.

Doug Feldman demonstrated a database program that he wrote for the 8-bit. It is composed of BASIC programming that is peppered with a variety of ML subroutines that take advantage of the Atari's ability to handle unlimited string length. The program takes approximately 8K of memory leaving more than 22K for data space. The ML routines are used to speed up disk I/O and the sort commands. This program is now in the disk library (# W032) and includes some documentation files.

Mike Pieronek demonstrated "SYNfile" by Synapse. He feels this is an excellent and versatile database but was less than pleased with the documentation. However it comes with an acceptable tutorial on the back of the disk. He strongly recommends backing up the data disks as this program accesses the disk drive often.

The ST library is now a reality with disks containing desk-top accessories, games, the ARC files, formatters, the Apple IIGS interpreter, picture files, clock/calendar accessories, editors and "The Splitter." Disks are sold for $5 only to persons with active memberships.

Disk Library

One of the most amazing public domain programs to become available for Atari XL/XE computers is Turbo Basic. This program was communicated to the USA by Atari user groups in Holland and Germany. Now, there is the Turbo Compiler. This program was also written for public domain by Frank Ostrowski. This utility will speed up the execution of Atari Basic programs 10 to 15 times. It will even increase the speed of Turbo Basic programs 3 times. The Turbo Compiler and the companion RUNTIME program will only work on XL/XE Ataris.

An obvious clue to the origins of these two new programs are that all the command prompts are written in German. However, do not fear, a complete documentation file is also available.

The Turbo Compiler appears to accept almost any legal Atari Basic coding. Thus, it does not have any problem with certain types of program commands or require any unique sequence of program statements. The only problems noted are with the use of the 'END' command and the use of two FOR commands before one NEXT command appears.

The obvious result of this programming innovation is the Turbo-charging of all your favorite Atari Basic programs. A complete Turbo Compiler Disk will be available in the WAUG Disk Library (# W031).

In my limited personal experience with Turbo Basic, I have found that it is entirely incompatible with two of my most frequently used utilities: Sparta DOS (all versions) and the G: Device graphics printing handler from Analog Magazine. I would appreciate hearing of other successful uses and / or incompatibilities with the Turbo Basic and Turbo Compiler system.

At the February 10 meeting, we will unveil several new 8-bit disks submitted by A.L. Jones and Harry Price (thanks alot !!).

Telecom

COUNTRY PEDDLER BBS
Sysops Bob & Derek Fritz

313-449-8544 Whitmore Lake (24 hr, 300/1200)

This BBS is one of the longest running and most widely accessed systems in Southeast Michigan. The software may have been a primitive AMIS clone at the beginning, but now it has been extremely modified and enhanced by the sysops. Some of the newer features include an on-line role playing fantasy game and special information Databases.

The Country Peddler BBS is also the communications link to the best and most convenient Atari 8-bit and ST repair service in Michigan. This is the famous CP REPAIR SERVICE. Leave a message with your phone number and Bob will get back to you within 24 hours. Pick up and delivery are included within a 30 mile radius of Whitmore Lake.

THE CLEAR THINKING BBS: Sysop Craig Harvey

313-761-2444 in Ann Arbor (24 hrs, 300/1200)

Hardware: Atari 520 ST (soon to be 1 meg)
820K disk drive for up/downloads
Ramdisk for info & messages
Software: Michtron BBS 2.0

Sigs Available:

1) Lounge - for messages and files that don't relate to any other Sig in particular. For instance, files that include other BBS numbers.

2) Atari ST - the files here are runable programs and documentation for them. Check for uncompiled source code in sig 4.

3) Atari 8 bit - Files here are divided into ones related to the mind, utilities, games, demos, and pictures.

4) Pascal/Modula 2 - Currently I do most of my programming in Kyan Pascal on the 8 bits, and TDI Modula-2 on the ST (which is very similar to Pascal). So here you'll find source code from me and from anywhere else I find it.

5) Clear Thinking - The subject of the mind/spirit and the abilities thereof fascinates me. I have a good bit of training in some methods of counseling to improve these capabilities, but I know there are a lot of other approaches that I know nothing of. Got any recommended reading? Insights you're willing to share? Questions? Hypotheses? ...
Files include book reviews and will include a list of sources of info on various relevant topics.

6) Fantasy - This, for some strange reason, has been the most active Sig on the BBS (message-wise, since it has no file section). The ONLY rule in this Sig is: No real names. This means to get access to the Fantasy Sig you need to log on with an unreal name and leave me a request for access. Check it out, but I am not responsible for whatever weird conversations you find.

MOLIN'S DEN BBS Sysop Mike Olin
313-420-0407 in Northville (24 hr, 300/1200)

You enter the house into the living-room. Mike is sitting on the couch ignoring that the TV is on. He's probably reading another Atari magazine or book. You cross the room, make a left, go down the foyer, another left and YOU'RE HERE!

Hi! My name is Mortimer and I live in MOLIN'S DEN. I was a figment of Mike's imagination almost from the day he got his first modem and I sprung to life on June 1, 1986. I started out as a 256K 800XL running the MACE AMIS1200.BBS software using a SmarTEAM 300/212a modem. I was an average and normal child (I was wearing a 30-sector buffer back then...) I soon got mixed up with the SpartaDOS gang from ICD and started hanging around with BASIC XL and the next thing ya know I'm a 59-sector brute! And after I got to know some more about the S-DOS gang, I jumped up to 75 sectors without hardly even trying.

Well, not everything was going great guns. If an adolescent computer could have acne, wouldn't ya know I'd get it? It would appear as phone-line noise and make little pimples all over my monitor. I used to get so mad at my mom (Ma Bell to you, if you don't mind!) 'cause she always said "Too bad, maybe you'll outgrow it someday."

Then it happened! With the help of a very good friend, (Some of you may have known FRED, aka Mike Mitchell). I climbed out of my old dark home and into a moderately furnished 320K XE. Let me tell you that was a turning point in my life! I still hang around with those folks from ICD and have made some new friends in the OSS gang. I know BASIC XE will be a friend for life! And as a young adult computer in this highly competitive BBS world, I am proud to ask people if they'd like to see my buffer! At nearly 200 sectors, I can perform all night and be fresh as a daisy in the morning! And to top it all off, I outgrew my acne troubles when I rid myself of the SmarTEAM modem. Who'd have guessed the poor thing was the cause of all the phone-noise problems that I had been blaming on my dear old mom? (The people at TEAM Technologies claim to have a fix for this now... Time will tell.) So now I'm using a dumb modem that does exactly what I tell it to do and I couldn't be happier!

OK, OK. Those of you who know me are having trouble with that last line, aren't you? I'm happy but I could be happier. Mike's been giving me a hard time lately about giving back the 1050 disk drives. So I've been considering getting an MIO board and that oughta make EVERYONE happy. Once again, the gang at ICD have the solution!

Well, that's enough for now... If you ever get in my neck of the woods, stop in to see me and tell me all about the BBSs in your area! I'm awake 24 hours and I can handle your visit at 300 or 1200 bps.

-

WAUG EXPRESS BBS Sysop Doug Feldman 313-662-3689 in Ann Arbor (24 hr, 300 baud)

The Express BBS software was written by Keith Ledbetter, the author of the excellent and very popular series of Express terminal programs. There are two versions of the Express BBS. One is written for the 1030/XM-301 modems. There is also a version for Hayes compatible modems using the 850 interface. Although the main program is written in Action, the BBS continually accesses an extensive set of text files that can be easily modified with a standard wordprocessor. There is also a file containing over 100 command prompts that can be edited with a wordprocessor. The prompt file is then 'compiled' with a Basic utility supplied on the master disk.

The Express BBS was written to be very versatile and can be configured in an amazing number of ways. The general design is best executed using the powerful SpartaDOS disk operating system. There can be from 1 to 25 message bases and from 1 to 8 upload/download directories. If desired, almost the entire system can be executed within a RAMDISK. The WAUG BBS is currently running off one DD drive and a 256K Ramdisk. There are currently 4 message bases: General, WAUG Topics, Download Index and Opinions.

Two popular features are the Quickscan message retrieval command and the EMAIL message system. All callers who wish to participate are issued a 5 or 6 character password. The password is requested at log-on and insures confidentiality of receiving and posting in the EMAIL system. The BBS also keeps track of the messages each caller has read from the public message bases.

Probably my biggest difficulties in running this BBS have been in attempting to modify the system after the initial set-up phase was completed. There are several 'editors' and utilities provided to modify the BBS but these must be executed very carefully. Perhaps the most annoying problem occurs when I sometimes forget to replace the BBS system disk in D1: when I log off from the local mode. Every time the BBS hangs up on a caller or on the sysop, the software updates two data files on the system disk in D1:. If this disk is not present upon log-off, the current disk is written-over instead. This always results in a complete destruction of the directory of the disk in D1:.

One other small problem is that one of the most common commands used in AMIS BBS software is 'F'=Files. In the Express, the 'F' command is used as the Feedback to Sysop command. This inevitably causes novice callers to get stuck in the message editor. I had to add several lines of text to help new callers exit from this mode.

I can recommend this software to sysops who wish to start a BBS that contains many of the newest and most popular features available for 8-bit systems. It appears to run without sysop intervention for long periods of time. I will be happy to consult individually with anyone trying to set up a BBS using the Express software.

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

FEB 10 --- TELECOMMUNICATIONS & MEET THE SYSOP!
MAR 10 --- WORD PROCESSORS FOR ST & 8-BIT
APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES MARATHON
MAY 12 --- LOCAL ATARI SOFTWARE & AUTHORS
JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER SELECTIONS

NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST

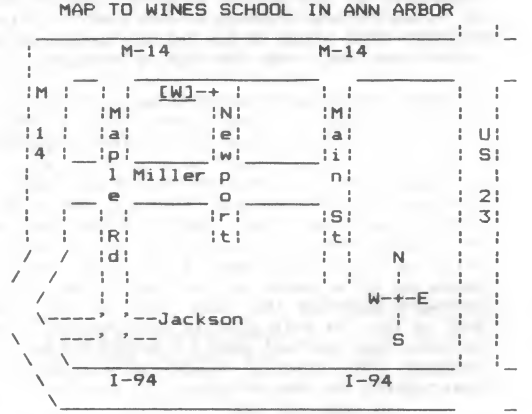
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

WAUG

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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

February 14th at 2:00 pm.
March 14st at 2:00 pm.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since I was out of town on business and didn't attend the January meeting, the minutes and notes may be a little brief. But what can I say? I'll make it up to you next month (I promise). Something that we should look at from a club standpoint, is how can we promote our club? Should we advertise in the newspaper or hang up signs? There should be a lot of people that got Atari's for Christmas and right about now are wondering what else their computer can do (besides play games). If we make ourselves known, I think our membership could dramatically increase. So please bring any ideas you have to the February meeting.

I hate to seem like I'm complaining, but I'de like all of you to look through your last three or four newsletters and notice the names of several people who always end up doing demos. You know, names like Marty Schmidt, LeRoy Valley, or Al Jennings. I LIKE doing demos of new software that I get and Marty and Al are doing great jobs, but I'de like to see some participation from the rest of you. I won't believe you for a second if you tell me that you didn't get something new for Christmas. Anyhow, enough of that drivel, see ya at that thar meetin. (That's Texas talk!)

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley....President/(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt...Treasurer/Sec./(517)792-6029
Al Jennings.....8-bit Disk Lib./(517)790- 1980
Lance Middleton ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman.....Assis. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Mid- Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

February's theme is programming languages for both the 8-bits and the ST's. We'll discuss what a "high level language" is and why you should consider learning one (other than Basic). Ever wonder what a compiler really does? Come to the February meeting and find out. We'll start out with a discussion of the items mentioned above, then get into the following demo's.

8-BIT DEMOS:

Basic XL by OSS & Turbo Basic will both be demoed by Marty Schmidt.

ST DEMOS:

MegaMax C will be demoed by LeRoy Valley. LDW Basic Compiler will be demoed by Marc Poisson.

In March we'll be covering Word Processors. Did you ever notice how people like to volunteer other people for things when they aren't present? Well, it seems like I will be demoing HabaWriter II for the ST. And a word processor wouldn't be complete without a spelling checker, so I'll be looking for a "volunteer" to demo THUNDER! at the March meeting.

On the 8-bit side, Marty Schmidt volunteered (now he's a REAL volunteer) to demo Letter Perfect on an 80 column screen. He has an

Omniview chip in his 130XE which supports 80 columns on a monitor. Included with the Omniview chip is the necessary instructions to patch Letter Perfect and Data Perfect for 80 column operation and a free 80 column word processor, Speed Script. Marty will also highlight some of the features of the free WP.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

RELICS TO RELISH

The February meeting focused on databases and spreadsheets, and from what I heard, it went very well. The meeting opened with Paul Bork demoing Zoomracks, a new and unique approach to managing data by Quickview Systems, Inc. Instead of the normal approach used by most databases where one record at a time is shown, Zoomracks uses a "time card" approach. Imagine the rack of time cards that many businesses use for keeping track of when employees punch in and out. At first glance, all you can see is the name of the employee at the top of the card. But if you pull out a specific card you get a great deal of information. You can find out things like: Is the employee in today, has he missed any time this week, how much overtime has he worked this week, where does he work, etc. The key is, to get to all of that information all you needed to do is select the name. Zoomracks stores data on cards in the same fashion, with the card titles showing on the screen. By pointing to a card and selecting it, you can access any data that you may have attached to that card. The only negative comments were that it doesn't support any mathematical functions, and doesn't have a very good report generator. Supposedly, these problems have been remedied in the new Zoomracks II.

Marty Schmidt then demoed Synfile by Synapse Software, a full featured database for the 8-bits. Synapse offers full mathematical functions, supports the extra memory on a 130XE, and a offers a free form screen. By this I mean that you can design your own screen layout, define your own fields, and supply your own prompts. Marty uses this database to maintain the club's membership list. It automatically flags any expired members, and can sort on any field. (i.e.- Last name, zip code, address).

Al Jennings then demoed Analog Database, a Public Domain database currently available from our library. While not as full featured as Synfile, it does offer the basic functions of a database and it is FREE!

The meeting was supposed to conclude with a demo of the new GEM version of VIP, a Lotus clone. I was in Dallas and my replacement (yes, I did find someone) had to work Saturday. The score was 1-3, it was the bottom of the ninth and things looked grim in Mudsville folks. But lo, from the bleachers came the cry, "Isn't that supposed to be compatible with Lotus?", and our hero stepped forward. Al Holzhausen, an avid IBM Lotus user who has never touched an ST (well, maybe he did touch one at a meeting, but I never saw him) started to play around with VIP. The keystrokes are identical to Lotus, and in minutes Al was entering data, formulas, and displaying graphs. While no one saw the GEM portion of VIP, it certainly cleared any doubts about Lotus compatibility. I have downloaded Lotus spreadsheets from IBM BBS's and they work fine on VIP, macro's and all! All things considered, I think Al put on an impressive display.

The meeting concluded with the raffle of the two Epyx 500XJ joysticks. The winners were: Frank Serresseque Joe Letourneau Congratulations to both Frank and Joe! Hey guys, make sure you tell us when you've used up your five million shots!

*** E B V ***

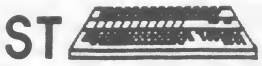
8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings Disk Drive
Joe Letourneau Monitor
Marty Schmidt Atari 800

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Frank Serresseque Monitor & Disk Drive
Dan Barrowman Keyboard

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.



ST NOTES by LeRoy Valley

Well, well, another month, another couple of new programs. I just started playing with some new goodies I bought and I'll briefly describe them here. The first is called PM Interface by XLent software, and I'm sure that this is going to be a big hit with all you Print Master fans. This slick little program (for the small sum of $23.00) allows you to design your own FONTS and BORDERS to be used with Print Master. The

process is very easy and allows you to build libraries of fonts and borders, which can then be used with the OTHER DISK option on Print Master. You can also define entire icons as a keystroke. This way, you could print out all of your icons across on a full page!

You can use Degas or Neochrome to develop icons, fonts or borders, and then use the PM converter to "grab" this information and convert it for use with PM Fonter or PM Border Editor. The package also works with any of the other XLent software (Typesetter Elite & Rubberstamp).

While we're on the subject of Print Master goodies, check out our public domain library! We've now got a utility to convert 8-bit Print Shop icons to Print Master format. I've already got quite a few converted. I think that we currently have 5 additional libraries of graphic icons!

Another new program that I'm playing with is called Buzzword. This is a great game for two or four or lots of people! It's a thinking game, but it's designed like a game show you might see on TV. You have 200 categories to choose from. One of the categories might be "THINGS THAT BITE". On the screen nine letters are displayed (in a 3x3 matrix) followed by a number. The letter is the first letter of one of the answers, and the number is the length of the answer (counting spaces and punctuation!). If the letter was S and the number was 5, the answer might be SNAKE. I say might be, because there could be more than one answer for the same block. At the bottom of the screen clues are given in the form of the total number of any letter for ALL nine answers. If you had an A5, you would know there are only 5 A's for all nine answers. As you get correct answers, these numbers decrement. You can play at any of three levels - Bright, Nimble, or Gifted, but all three levels will offer you a challenge with the right cards. The cards can be used over and over, as there a multitude of answers for each category and the computer selects words at random! There are a total of 32 options to change - from a Timer, to no lengths given for the answers. If you're into word games, this is a Gotta Have!

Well, that's it for this month. I'll leave you with a tip. Like to have a Ramdisk installed at Boot up that asked you what size you want? You can rename M-disk by Michtron or A-ram by A-seka from a .TOS file to a .PRG file and place it in an auto folder. At boot up the program will run and ask you what size you want installed. Just install the drive now and save the desktop. It'll work every time! If you don't want a ram disk, just answer 0.

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GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential address

Our last meeting was a productive one, if you missed it you missed alot!!! A number of things were discussed and several of them we decided to do, I'v listed them for you.

1. We want to expand the library with new programs, while also trying to build our public domain section. We plan on raising cash for this by selling our Analog disks for $1.00. Steven has also told us that he plans on revamping the entire library, organizing the disk in some sort of order. Games on different disks then utilities ect. This will really be great!! Keep up the good work Steven!!!

2. We will have the latest Analog disk at the next meeting, and will have available in the library the last Antic and Analog ST disks.

3. We have committed to fully supporting the ST computer and have made a position for a new officer in charge of all ST info. Dave Slawinski has taken over this job. Dave will be making sure that we don't forget the ST users. Also he will be filling on the latest ST gossip at each meeting.

4. Fred Farleigh has committed to be our secretary. As you can see we are not using our old news letter format, but are using the Michigan Atari News Letter. Fred's job will be to compile the articles (by the way, we do need some!!) on disk and to upload them on to CHAOS BBS and then the news letter is printed and sent out. Thanks Fred.

5. Fred has also agreed to teach a hardware class. This would entail, Cleaning and maintenance, up grades, following Analogs hardware projects ect. I don't think you'll want to miss to many of these!!

6. The computer fair. We want to make this a great success. Dave Oldenburg is heading up this project. If he calls you please give him all the help that you can.

7. We decided to start a gaming competition. The game most liked was M.U.L.E. , although we don't plan on limiting it to that. Bring your suggestions to the next meeting and we'll vote on them. We will have a sign up list for at the next meetin. A class will be offered to teach those of you that don't know how to play MULE so don't feel left out.

8. A special thanks to Steve Haddix for all the work he puts into keeping our mailing list up to date and mailed to CHAOS.

ATTENTION THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ONE WEEK LATER THAn USUAL. FEBUARY 21 2:00 AT DEWING HALL K-COLLEGE KALAMAZOO MI DANIEL YOUNGS 372-3229

Disk Library

by Stephen Buechler

Since I took on the job of club librarian I have thought of different ways to improve our clubs library. One of these ways is to reorganize the public domain library by categories and the only way I can do this is if all the people in the club bring back the public domain disks that they borrowed. I will also need to have everyone bring back the books, magazines, and software that were borrowed from the library so that I can finish the list of the the club books and software. Members of the club can also help build up the library by bringing disks of public domain programs that aren't in library that you think would be fun to play or use. If you have any public domain programs, music files (AMS or Music Composer), and picture files (just Microillustrator) that you would like to put in the library just put them on a disk and bring them to the meeting and I will put them in the library.

If any of you have any ideas of ways to improve the library either tell them to me at the meeting or call me at 323-9573.

CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-4599
P-R Chairman	William Locke	782-6873
Membership Coord.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Harold LaRue

The big news...The CACE Faire !!!

As you may (or may not) know, CACE is having a computer faire at Westwood Mall in Jackson on the weekend of Feb. 21.

Atari is graciously providing some promotional material that we will give away. I have been told that there will be some media coverage of the event.

Look for me on the news, I'll try to get my mug in there.

That is about it for this month...

C.U. Later...

Coordination Corner

by Brent Fisher

Well here it is time to do another column. So to start it off I'd like to thank Joe Garner for the use of his computer at the meeting, along with Harlod LaRue for bringing his moniter. As for demonstrations I'm like to thank Tim Sharp, Harold Larue, and Wolfgang Mueller for their demo of Flight Simulator for the ST in which they proved that you can have two people playing the game together from different machines. Also again Tim Sharp for his demonstration of Silent Service on the ST.

For next month I have a demo of Advanced Music System for the 8-bits, and I believe a demo of MIDI on the ST. Along with a showing of World Championship Karate for the ST. And also some demostrations of some type-in ANALOG programs. I know that we had Hardball at the meeting last month but since so few people saw it we decided to use it again this month.

Well if anyone has some suggestions for future meetings feel free to give me a call anytime after 5 at 764-4599, or leave me E-mail on The Keep, JABBS, or Med-Sig.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

by Joe Cripps

Happy New Year everyone. Just think only three more months of the frozen stuff,also known as computer prime time, before we are driven outside by the terrible Sun God to be forced to participate in such things as golf, fishing, swimming, and softball. I shutter at the thought of having to leave my warm abode and easy chair to do "outdoor activities". Well now that everyone is fully bummed, I will continue on with the uplifting meeting minutes.

Demos were very successful this month. We had four ST's and one 800XL demoing various programs. Thanks to all of you for your participation. And especiall Mr. 1040ST, you know who you are !!

This month's discussion centered around the upcoming computer fair. We have recieved enough hardware support, but we still need alot of individual support the days of the fair. Time is running out, "UNCLE CACE NEEDS YOU". The dates of the fair are Feb. 21 & 22. Please don't wait until the next meeting to volunteer, give one of the officers a call now so we will be able to plan. Bob Kingsbury notified everyone that the Cooperative Extension Agency has a BBS with information on subjects like gardening, canning, cooking, or lawn care. A representative of the agency volunteered to set up a display at the fair. Any person that is interested in accessing this board should call the Agency for a password. Scott Boland reported on his progress with respect to the setup at Westwood Mall and the raffle. It was decided that we will not have a raffle because the cost of the type of tickets that would be required by the State of Mich. would not make it worth our while. We will replace the raffle with a free drawing for the software supplied by Sid Young and Wards.

Bob Kingsbury identified to the group that he will, starting today, have a disk of the month. This disk will have stuff that he has collected during the month it may not show up in the library. So, make sure you attend the next meeting or you'll miss out on some special disks. The price is three dollars a disk.

Joe Garner suggested that the club obtain a modem to be loaned out to the membership. It was agreed upon in general, but will be put to a vote at the next meeting.

The Prez notified the group that he is just about to get the new BBS on line (As of this writing the board is up, congratulations Harold!!). The cost to our membership will be five dollars per year. In an effort to build a good source of PD's the board will have a limit of one upload for every five downloads.

Wolfgang "Mr. 1040ST" Mueller volunteered to take on the responsibilities of ST Librarian. Thanks Wolfgang.

Finally, the size and especially the content of our monthly magazine could be increased if it were able to obtain more advertisers. There are a good number of articles waiting in the wings. So, if you know of someone who might be interested in advertising in the best computer magazine in the state, please introduce them to Mid Michigan Atari Magazine.

Disk Library

By Bob Kingsbury

The club library is undergoing another change, hopefully for the better. There will be a new type of listing of the clubs files. When done the list will be divided into separate categories, this should make it easier to find the program that your looking for. So please bear with me till I get it done.

This months disk of the month has donations from John Charles, his son Kevin and Joe Garner. For those of you who have missed meetings lately the disk of the month has programs hot off of Compuserve, GEnie, Peoplelink, ETC. and other BBS systems that are contacted once in a while. If you have not been to a meeting lately you may be missing out of some interesting programs. Got a program you like or one you just downloaded from your favorite BBS,bring it to the meeting and share it with the club.

Let me get off the subject of the club library for a minute. For those of you who would like your drive to run faster without the cost of a HAPPY ENHANCEMENT you will not want to miss the next meeting. I will be bringing one of my drives that has a new board installed in it. This will run ALL unprotected software at a faster speed and you don't need a special DOS to do it. This upgrade will also do Double density, has an 8k buffer that reads a track at one time not a sector at a time like the original 1050. This board will be in SID YOUNGS by the time you read this news letter. For more info call Joe at SIDS or come to the february meeting to see it in action.

Now back to the club business. The Westwood Mall computer fair is close to a reality now and your help is needed so come out in february and get involved and help make it a success.

To help cut down on copy time at the meetings please call me at home on my private line (789-7533) if you know what you want from the club files.

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Scott Boland

As of January 22nd, after paying for the newsletter and blank disks for the upcoming computer faire, the C.A.C.E. treasury had $51.74 in petty cash and $394.65 in the bank account. This brings the grand total to $446.39.

I would like to welcome Rob Hawkins as our newest member to the club. Rob is a student at Spring Arbor College. I am sure you will find the club an enjoyable expierence.

Last week I received a letter from Atari Corp. stating that we have finally been added to the list of registered Atari User Groups. The letter goes on to say that Atari hopes to institute a new era of cooperation between Atari Corp. and us, their most enthusiastic customers.

To encourage users to communicate with Atari, they have set up Atari Base, the official Atari Corp. electronic Bulletin Board System. Anyone with a modem may call and leave messages, ask questions, etc. Callers have access to the latest news and information on Atari products as well as public domain programs to download. Five separate lines are available to allow over 2,000 callers per week. To reach Atari Base, call 408-745-2012.

Here is an update to the progress of the upcoming computer faire. There will be twelve systems set up in the Westwood Mall surrounding the central fountain. The date of the faire is February 21st and 22nd. We will be selling program disks from our public domain library for the price of a blank disk and a copy fee. As an added incentive we will be giving away free promotional items donated by Atari Corp. with the purchase of the program disks. We also are planning on holding a free drawing for commercial software donated by Sid Young's Distributing and Montgomery Wards. There may also be a display set up by the Jackson County Cooperative Extension Service. They plan to demonstrate the Jaxcom BBS to show the public how they may access a wide variety of information. There will be demonstrations of word processors, graphic programs, music programs, spread sheets, utilities, and of course games by the members of C.A.C.E. Hope to see you all at the faire.

Thank you, Scott

Just Starting

DO WE WANT OR NEED A NOVICE USERS SIG?

by Jim Boyce

There is a voice calling in the wilderness, "Help what does it do?". Or perhaps you have heard "$@%computer" and then into the closet it goes along with the one bent ice skate and all the other stuff that something will be done with some day.

First let it be said, up front, that I am a novice user and I have a million questions that need to be answered. So I put it out to the general membership - DO WE WANT OR NEED A NOVICE USERS SIG? I personally think that any user group should have a place that the novices can get together and talk things out at a level they can function at. It frustrates me to no end when I try to get information and I get talked down to or so far above my head that it misses entirely.

I understand that it is difficult for a person, that has forgotten more than I will know, to talk on an elementary level.

And for that reason I purpose to that segment of the club that a NOVICE USER SIG be formed and that we meet as soon as the general meeting is over. I think that answers can be found to our problems as novices if we function as a group. It is not a sin to not know as much as some of the others - besides who knows, they (the great ones) may have forgotten enough they may have to come to us (this is where you laugh and then agree with me).

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

VIEWPOINT

Presidential Mumbling for February
By Jim Steele

Well, here we go again with more mumblage from the teflon president. Let me say at the outset that I will accept no questions during this column regarding the so called "Atarigate" crisis. Nor will I discuss the alleged shipments of "f-15 simulator" to Iran or covert aid to the Amiga rebels in Central America. I will say that all of us 68000 types are allies fighting the "Evil Empire of Armonk"

If you don't understand that first paragraph, you haven't been calling the FACTS BBS. You've missed some of the strangest and funniest messages seen in recent days. So much for that, on to the minutes....

January's meeting featured reports from the winter Consumer Electronics Show. Atari made a good showing of itself again. New products announced were improved ST models, a laser printer and a PC clone. The original text of Antic's online reports and Atari's press releases are available on FACTS BBS. Two more Antic reports came in after I printed up the handout I prepared for the meeting. These are also on FACTS, if not in this issue somewhere.

That's all for this month, see you all in March.

-Jim

Next Meetings
<><><><><><>
February 11 6:30pm
February 28 9:30am
March 11 6:30pm
March 28 9:30am
April 8 6:30pm
April 25 9:30am

Flint Area Atari Bulletin Boards
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ST

ST NEW FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

Those who didn't attend the January meeting missed out on the demo I gave of Publishing Partner from SoftLogik and of Aegis Animator from Aegis. All in attendance were duly impressed by these two very powerful packages.

Publishing Partner has the capability to take the ST community by storm like Printshop did for the 8 bit world a couple of years ago. It offers all of the features of a top of the line desktop publishing program at a fraction of the cost. I just read a comparison of five leading desktop publishing programs for the IBM in PC Magazine and was surprised to find that some of the packages costing over $800 did not offer some of the features that are standard in Publishing Partner.

I would expect that over the next six months or so the majority of user group newsletters will be produced with Publishing Partner. Only a couple of bug fixes and additional printer drivers and printer fonts are needed to complete this package. Softlogik has seemed very responsive to user input and will be sending a free upgrade to all registered owners. Look for a full blown review.

I am also trying to work out a special group purchase of Publishing Partner with Laverne from National Computer Clinic for $99 (retail is $149) to group members only. Contact me if you are interested. I would like to work out a special deal each month if the members are interested. I would probably need a minimum of 6 persons to get a special price. I'll have more info at the Saturday workshop.

The Aegis Animator is an animation package that allows you to create scripts of animation using different techniques. It uses the full GEM interface and is another powerful package but takes some dedication to learn the ins and outs of animation. Look for a disk of Aegis Animator script files in the near future. Aegis has graciously allowed their player program to be placed in the public domain so that even if you are not an artistic wizard you can enjoy the animated files of others.

NEW DISKS

February will see a large infusion of new disks into the GAG ST Disk Library. At least 5 new disks will be available with something for everyone.

As usual there will be at least one new disk of Tiny pics with computer art from around the world. I have also put together another disk of programs that will only run on monochrome monitors. Highlighting this disk is a German Chess program, Krabat, which is very well done and plays a mean game of Chess. The difficulty level is adjustable and the playing pieces can be edited with the accompanying editor program. Moves can be taken back and both your time and the computer's is shown on the screen. A color version will be available soon.

Also on the monochrome disk is a beta test version of an Apple IIc emulator program that is supposed to be compatible with 40 column displays. I am not familiar with the Apple OS so I don't know how well it works. Also includes two files which look like ports of Applesoft and Integer Basic. A hacker's delight! Another beta test program on the monochrome disk is a 1024 by 1024 drawing program. The author also promises a 6502 emulator by the summer which will allow you to run Apple, Commodore, and Atari 8 bit software. Should be a neat trick but don't hold your breath waiting for this product.

Rounding out the monochrome disk is a Printmaster to Typsetter conversion program and a nasty little graphics demo, "Bananas", from the wicked minds of German ST freaks.

A telecommunications disk includes the latest version of the powerful terminal program, Uniterm, as well as David Betz's rendition of a somewhat simpler program, BMODEM. Uniterm is another of the heavy duty type programs that offers sophisticated terminal emulation and is not recommended for beginners to telecommunications. Bmodem on the other hand is much easier to grasp and supports both Xmodem and Ymodem downloading as well as script files for autologons. Complete documentation is included with both programs.

Hack lovers will delight in Larn another game in the style of Rogue only done with text graphics. This game offers hours of delight as you descend into increasing perilous levels of the dungeon. The Larn disk includes two versions of the game; one version is arced so that both would fit on one single sided disk.

A catch all disk includes the latest version of ST Writer, version 1.70 that allows you to print the entire ST character set. A recent issue of STart includes helpful tips for the use of ST Writer as well as a history of how this word processor evolved and continues to be improved. Also included is a checkers program, Cadenza, that comes in both a program and desk accessory version.

Now that football season is over, continue to enjoy the game with the public domain version of football which allows you to control both the offense and defense over 4 quarters of 15 plays each. At the end of the game you are presented with a screen full of stats which lets you gauge your efficiency, passing yards, running yards, completion percentage, etc. Football.prg is a pleasant surprise and includes documentation.

Other programs on this grab bag disk include a utility to convert Printshop icons to Printmaster format. This opens up thousands of icons to Printmaster owners. Both a basic version and a compiled program are included.

Don't miss the February meeting where you will see the latest and best in new programs both public domain and commercial. Help is also available for any problems that you may be having with your ST. After all, the GAG meeting is largest gathering of ST owners in Genesee County. Aren't you impressed?

Disk Library

February Library Offerings
by Jerry Cross

Hi all, welcome to February!

This month there are several new disks. We are still going through disks I got in trade and I am coming across more very good programs.

To begin with, there are two new AMS disks (#165 and #166), and we plan to have about two more each month for a while. Jim Tuma is currently doing a make-it or break-it session trying to weed out the best files. He has about 20 disks to sift through!

Disk #167 is another assortment of utilities. Featured are WINDOWS from a recent Antic magazine, and DATABASE, an excellent data-base program from a past Antic. You will need to read the magazine for more information on these two programs. WINDOWS will create drop-down windows in your programs, and adds a nice touch to any of your basic programs.

Disk #168 is a great computer version of MONOPOLY. It is a text version of the game (sorry, no graphics) but you can play against

three computer opponents! Remember when you were a kid and traded your dumb sister Baltic Ave. for Boardwalk and three railroads? Well, these computer players aren't that easy. They make some smart trades, and can't be beaten very easily.

Or maybe your a couch potato and are hooked on WHEEL OF FORTUNE? Disk #170 is for you! This version has lots of phrases to guess, and I found it quite fun to play.

There were a lot of new Graphic 9 pictures on Compuserve recently. These are Computereyes pictures (sort of like Koala Pics) with excellent detail. There is a slideshow program on the disk that will display the pictures. If you have a ramdisk, transfer the pictures there for much quicker displays!

Finally, Disk #171 contains RAINBOW DOS. It's another of those "Gee, It look's nice, but what can you do with it?" programs. They took the regular Atari Dos and modified the menu to either load a different font (there are several on the disk), or you can view a Koala Picture or MicroIllistrator formated picture. There are a few other surprises too. Also on the disk is German Graphic demo called "SLOT MACHINE".

That's it for this month. I have one other problem. There still seems to be problems with the GAG disks. I had a couple returned at the meeting that would not run. If you get a bad disk, please return it. I'm very sorry for any inconvience you may have. I'm trying to figure out why this is happening. I now have a new drive and hope this solves the problem.
One other reminder, I had a few request for blank disks at the last meeting. Once upon a time we did sell them because the price of disks was over $2 each. We were purchasing them in bulk and were able to sell them for $7.50 for a box of 10. But because of the rapidly falling price of blank disks, you can now purchase them for $5, or even 29 cents each if you buy them in bulk. Since everyone could now buy disks for very reasonable prices, I decided to stop selling them. However, if you would like me to continue to stock blank disks, let me know. If there is enough interest I can purchase them in bulk and save GAG members a few dollars. But I need to know how many of you are interested.

That's it, see you at the next meeting.

Mailing address:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, located at
2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint,MI.
Meetings begin at 6:30pm. We also have a Saturday morning session for second-shifters. This group meets on the fourth Saturday on the month, during the school year. Come on out and say "G'day"

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Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Ex-Chairman's Final -Tom Siemietkowski

This last meeting was by far the best meeting we have had in a very long time and there were many good signs. We had a record number of members plus guests and new members. New enthusiasms and new ideas were brought up from the new officers about their positions and their plans for the future. I don't know what this new spark was but it was everyone sparkling as a group. I surely hopes this carries on through the year with more members involved and willing to help the new officers.

Before I go further let me welcome the new members;Bryan Lewis,John Burke,Karen Noble and Ron Walker. There seems to be a good cross section of computer enthusiasts in our newest members and that is what the group is based on. We have needed this growth for a long time and with this new blood and interest I'm sure the slump we have been in has come to an end.

This was also our Officers Election meeting and we had a re-alignment of positions and personnel plus new involvement at various positions. I hope the changes of responsibilty will stoke the fires of interest for each of the new officers. We also had some promises of extra help from other members which is always a great sign of renewed interest.

We were all asked to check for a possible new meeting place in a centrally located place in town,it seems my basement is starting to get a little crowded. We will discuss our findings at the next meeting and make our final choice then. We will still have the next meeting at my house on February 19.(Third Thursday of each month 7:00 P.M.). At this meeting Dan Egan will be demonstrating his new MIO board,ACTION cartridge and Silent Service. This meeting will also be very important in that the new officers will try to set their patterns for the next year. Bring your ideas,comments and support with you.

I have a copy of our old Constitution and some revisions have to be made, then I will get a copy to each of you after the printing.

After the business meeting Dan demonstrated the SAM program,that is the voice sythisizer for speech. One part of the program was a voice playback of anything typed in and the other was the phonetic breakdown of words to make them sound like real speech. That second part is very time consuming but the results of better speech makes it all worth it. Dennis added to the interest of the meeting with a demonstration of his Panasonic Printer with it's wide variaty of innovated features.

Again let me ask you to check your mailing labels for your dues due date.

As of the beginning of the meeting Josephine gave a balance of $164.21 in the treasury.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

by Chuck Steele

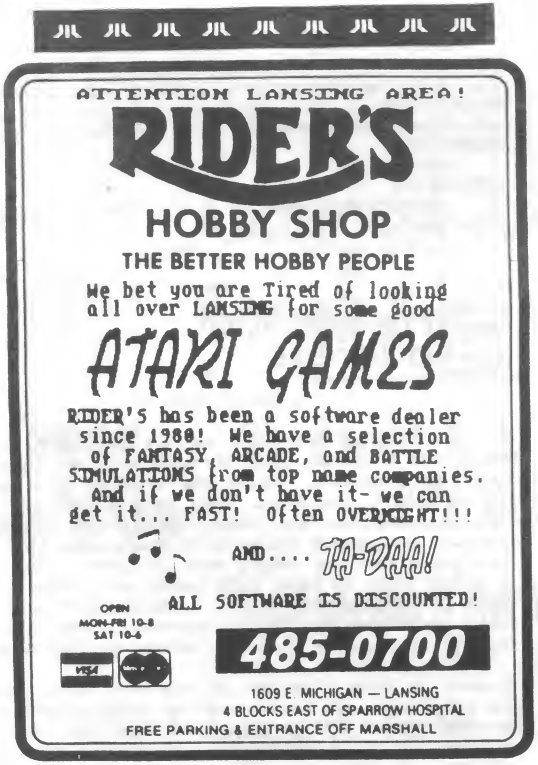
By the looks of things, I am now your new president. Now to come through with all those campaign promises. About the promise of a new ST for every member..... Well have you ever seen a politician who really kept those campaign jokes? And about those guys that came into the meeting after the voting was all over. That is a sneaky way to keep from being an officer. Well all seriousness aside, I really want to thank everyone for their support. I was excited by the enthusiasm that was shown by the members.

I want to thank Tom for all his work last year as president. It takes alot of work behind the scenes to get things done and keep the ball rolling. It is a job that takes the talents and efforts of many individuals working together to

make this club work. I'm looking forward to working with the officers in creating a strong and growing Atari Club here in Battle Creek. Last year was a transitional year for the club as Gary left the club after having been in the driver seat since the beginning. This change made us realize that to continue the club we all had to pitch in and do our part. I feel we are now moving forward again.

I want people to get more enjoyment from their Atari's. I feel the club can help new members by answering their questions. New members feel free to phone the officers and ask questions if you have problems. Older members, we plan to be showing new hardware and Software as it comes out, so come to the meetings and see what is new. Don't forget the Disk of the Month. Great Software at bargain, bargain prices. Looking forward to seeing everyone on Feb. 19.

P.S. If you get that New Program or New piece of hardware,(such as a sheet feeder for the printer.) Call me so we can have it Demoed at the next meeting.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Atari Technical

LOVE AT FIRST BYTE
By: Mathew S. Howe

Welcome back to the mysteries of programming in BASIC. Before we get into this months topic I would like to announce that through the graciousness of Jim Rogers you may now get your programming and other technical questions answered on two BBS's in the Flint area. Jim is setting up not only a special message base for us but there will also be a special down load area for programming utilities. Checkerboard is the place and (313) 736-9348 is the number. Look for the "wizard" and you will find an answer. This is not in effect at the time I am writing but should be in operation by the time you read this article. The Checkerboard is a 24hr 300/1200 baud atari BBS. So give us a call and see what we have to offer.

Last month we talked about some of the various BASIC implementations available for the atari 8 bit computer line. Well since last month I have had a chance to run some tests on the different BASIC's we talked about last month. One of the things I was able to do was run a bench mark program. A benchmark for those of you that don't know, is a program that does a standard calculation (or operation) so that it can be timed and used as a comparison of the different systems. I wrote a program to calculate the values of a "Fourier translation" from 2 to 100. Now it is not important that you know what a "Fourier translation" is just that it is one whopper of an equation. I timed the how long it took the program to run with the various BASIC's and here are some VERY interesting results:

IMPLEMENTATION	TIME
ATARI BASIC	100
BASIC XL (FAST MODE)	98 SEC
TURBO BASIC	13 SEC
MMG COMPILER	94 SEC
TURBO BASIC COMPILER	10 SEC

As you can readily see Turbo BASIC was the runaway winner. Now one point of interest here is that the benchmark tested only mathematical computing ability. Because of some of it's specialized functions BASIC XL is still the fastest in P/M graphics and most graphic situations. I was not able to come up with a decent graphic benchmark test yet so all we have to go on is my general impressions of speed.

The last two items on the chart are compiled programs. What is a compiler you ask? Well among other things it is the main subject of this months article. When a computer goes to execute a program it must convert it to machine language (the microprocessor doesn't know a gosub from a let). The computer can do this in one of two ways. The first is the way most micro-computers work and that is called interperted. As each line is executed the BASIC cartridge (or whatever) translates the line to machine code then executes it. After executing the line it promptly forgets it and goes on to the next line. Besides the time it takes to translate each line there is a waste in the fact that if the computer executes the line again it will retranslate it (such as in a loop). Wouldn't it be nice if we could keep those lines in memory and then execute them at machine code speeds? Well that is what a compiler does. A compiler is the second way that a computer executes a program written in a high level language (BASIC). Most main frames use this as there method of running, that is how you can run several languages at the same time on the same machine. So let's look at how a compiler does it's thing and look at the ones compared above and see how they differ.

The MMG compiler is by far the more versatile of the two. It will compile Atari BASIC into a true machine code file that can be loaded and run from DOS as if it had always been machine language. Because the Atari has no math routines in its operating system the compiler will need to add a math routine to handle any math calculations you may use in your program. The MMG compiler gives you a choice of either floating point math or integer math. This is handy as the integer version will run several times faster than the floating point version. The test program by the way used floating point math so it was not the fastest application of the compiler. I have compiled a lot of programs using the MMG and have found their claim of three times faster in floating point or ten to fifteen times faster integer to be fairly accurate. The test program used here was the exception to that in that the compiler fell flat on it's face. In particular I have compiled several public domain games that looked interesting but were two dang slow and low and behold they fairly flew across the screen. I have found the compiler to be an excellent way to speed up graphics. There are also very few things the compiler will balk at, one is "CLOAD" and "CSAVE". The MMG also will not "CONT". As neither of these are real common commands to the disk user it is not of any concern. One thing that can cause you a little more grief is that all GOSUB's and GOTO's must use line numbers and not variables (such as GOTO 100 instead of GOTO START). If the original program was written in this way it can be a real pain to go back and change. But other than those minor hangups the MMG will digest anything written in Atari BASIC.

The Turbo-compiler on the other hand is not quite as versatile. First and foremost it does not compile to true machine language. You must first load a "runtime" package and then load the compiled program. But even in heavy math programs as you can see from the chart it flat out flies. Again I have not had a chance to try it on a graphics type program to compare it with the MMG one on one but it does look to be very fast and efficient. There are a couple of things the Turbo-compiler doesn't like also. Those being the same as the MMG but it also does not like a loop (such as a FOR NEXT) to have more than one termination. For instance it will not compile the following sequence.

```
10 FOR Q=1 TO 100
20 PRINT Q*A
30 IF Q=10*A THEN NEXT Q
40 PRINT Q+A
50 NEXT Q
```

Notice there are two NEXT's for the FOR. This will work fine in BASIC and the MMG does not mind it but it will give the Turbo-compiler fits. The last disadvantage to the Turbo-compiler is that it is in German. Now that does not mean that you have to be bilingual to us it but you better take notes when you read the docs or it will be real hard to figure out what you are doing.

Both compilers work in the same way basically. You run the compiler tell it what basic file to compile (it has to be in the disk drive) and tell it what file name you want the file to be when done. Because the MMG makes true machine language it can be named AUTORUN.SYS and will work fine.

So what do I recommend in a compiler? Well that depends on what you want it for. The Turbo-compiler is public domain and so I recommend every programmer have a copy of it. The Turbo-compiler is great if you want to compile programs for your own use but because it requires the loading of a runtime package it might be hard for some novices or children to use the software you create with it. On the other hand the MMG will do it all and end up with a file that looks like any other machine code file when done. The major drawback to the MMG is its eighty dollar price tag and the fact it is hard to find a copy even at full retail. I myself own one though and I will use it as my first choice when compiling as it really does the job for me. Well that is about all there is on the basics of compilers so till next month:

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Atari News

Atari Announces New Products at CES

Las Vegas, NV, Jan. 8 -- In a dramatic press conference held this morning at the Consumer Electronics Show, spokesmen for the Atari Corporation introduced a panoply of new products for 1987. Highlights included three significant new additions to Atari's flagship ST line of high-performance personal computers, a revolutionary low-cost laser printer, and an IBM PC-compatible personal computer of radically new design.

The new ST computers, dubbed "Mega STs 1, 2, and 4" incorporate one, two, and four megabytes of RAM, respectively. Encased in a newly-designed system unit with integral 800K microfloppy drive and detachable, ergonomic keyboard, the new machines are visibly different from Atari's current 520ST and 1040ST models, while remaining 100% compatible with them. Additional enhancements to the Mega machines include a battery- backed realtime clock, internal mounting space for an additional circuit board, and full external routing of the 68000 bus, making their architecture "wide open" for further enhancements. "We took all our customer's suggestions on how we could improve the ST, and incorporated them in this series," said Neil Harris, Atari's Director of Marketing Communications. Delivery of the new machines, via computer specialty stores, is expected to begin shortly at a price-point of "about $1000."

The Mega ST is housed in an independent "system unit," about 22" square by 2" high, containing the CPU, a double-sided floppy drive and an internal power supply. The ST's normal complement of ports, including those for DMA, RS-232 serial, parallel, disk, video, cartridge, MIDI, mouse, and joystick, plus an additional port for connecting the detachable, ergonomic keyboard, are included. The Mega ST system unit is reinforced to support a monitor and can be stacked with other components -- notably the enhanced 20-megabyte hard disk drive. Even fully loaded, it will take up far less room than present ST configurations.

Further expansion is possible by routing the bus outside to an external card-cage. RAM expansion up to 16 megabytes and networking capabilities will soon be available from Atari as low- cost add-ons.

Networking capabilities and sufficient memory for running multiple, co-resident applications, plus the promise of desktop publishing are sure to make the Mega ST an office favorite in the coming year.

The new Atari laser printer, shown in a prototype version, will match or exceed the performance of present laser printer systems while costing only about half as much -- about $1500. By redesigning the standard laser printer to take advantage of the power latent in the ST line -- particularly the new Mega STs -- Atari hopes to make full-featured desktop publishing a reality at less than $3000 for a complete system; about what a conventional laser printer costs today. Designed to interface with the ST's high-speed DMA (Direct Memory Access) port and incorporating a standard laser "engine," the Atari laser printer will produce rapid throughput at 300 dots-per-inch resolution. Though technical details have not yet been revealed, Shiraz Shivji, head of Atari's hardware engineering division, states that Atari "has designed an admirably flexible system that includes all the advantages and few of the disadvantages of present laser printer architectures. The printer will be able to handle multiple fonts and standard page-description languages at the discretion of software. Moreover, adapting present software to use the laser printer's full capabilities should be fairly simple, providing such software has been written in conformance with GEM standards."

Atari's new IBM PC-compatible machine, the Atari PC, is a radical departure from present "PC clone" designs, offering top- of-the-line compatibility and features at a record-breaking price of under $500. Housed in a system unit similar to the Mega ST with integral 5-1/4" floppy drive and detachable XT-style keyboard, the PC/XT compatible Atari PC sports 512K RAM standard (expandable to 640K on the motherboard), an additional 256K of graphics-dedicated RAM, a custom graphics chip providing enhanced EGA, CGA, IBM Monochrome, and Hercules graphics capabilities, and a Microsoft compatible mouse. It operates at the IBM standard 4.77 Mhz or at a high-speed 8 Mhz "turbo mode," and provides for the addition of an 8087 math coprocessor at either speed. Shipments of the Atari PC will begin in March.

Standard serial, parallel, and combination video ports, and an ST-style disk port, are all included. The mouse port is based on the Microsoft INPORT chip, and an ST-type mouse is included with the system. Thus, unlike competing PC-compatible systems, the Atari PC will be able to run PC GEM, Microsoft Windows, and mouse-based programs like Microsoft Word, right out of the box.

As one would expect, Atari has paid special attention the Atari PC's graphics capabilities. Atari has managed to shoehorn IBM Monochrome, CGA, EGA, and Hercules graphics capabilities into the Atari PC. Besides the fact that the Atari PC is the only PC-compatible to include EGA graphics as a standard feature, Atari's Shiraz Shivji notes: "our EGA is completely downward-compatible with CGA. As a result, users will experience no compatibility problems when using the lower graphics modes." What's more, Atari has announced a $200 monochrome greenscreen monitor for use with the Atari PC that can display all its graphics modes; including the high resolution EGA color mode, using intensity gradients (gray scales) to represent colors. This is the first monitor that incorporates these capabilities. "The monitor is intelligent," says Shivji, "and recognizes the frequency of signals coming from the combination video port, adjusting itself appropriately to display whatever kind of text or graphics the machine produces."

The Atari PC is virtually 100% compatible with software available for the IBM PC and XT. While its slimline housing provides no room for mounting internal circuit cards, it is doubtful that more than a handful of users will require more capabilities than the machine provides in its off-the-shelf configuration. For those who do, Atari intends to provide an external expansion box in the near future.

Industry Report

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LAS VEGAS CES REPORT
By Jon A. Bell, Editor- START, and
Matt Loveless, Consulting Editor- START
12/Jan/1987

Atari's display at the Consumer Electronics show was a huge assemblage of black plexiglass panels, right at the entrance of the West Hall. Atari's location was terrific -- their display was the first thing you saw when you walked into the building.

In all, there were about 20 STs, mainly 520s, which were shared by software developers. Atari had 2 of the new Mega STs (both 2 megabyte versions -- Mega ST2s); one sitting next to Antic Software's StereoTek glasses display, the other connected to the Atari laser printer. Also shown was a new videogame machine- the "XE System". It was displayed (not running) in a glass case at the Atari booth. The XE System is a small, squarish box which doesn't resemble a standard videogame. Its sharp angles and round, pastel buttons give it an unusual, almost art-deco appearance. According to ATARI, it is fully expandable with a plug-in keyboard and disk drive, turning it into an introductory computer. It will be available 2nd quarter of 1987. An odd piece of Atari XE hardware was their cassette program recorder -- the XC 11.

THIRD PARTY DEVELOPER NEWS

Hybrid Arts Inc., the software and hardware with a reputation for putting out the best MIDI software in the industry, showed one of the most exciting new products in the Atari world: The ADAP Soundrack Digital Sampler. ADAP stands for Analog to Digital Processor. It's a $2000 hardware plus software system, built in conjunction with Nilford Laboratories, Inc., for the Atari ST, designed to replace equipment costing over thirty times as much. The basis of the ADAP is a racey black rack mount box with sound input and output lines, plus an interface box which plugs into the cartridge port of a one- (or more) megabyte machine.

Digital sampling is a process where sound is converted into digital patterns which a computer can store, manipulate, and play back at will. Once the sound is in the ST, it appears as a digital waveform in a window in the center of the screen.

Hybrid Arts claims the system can sample at a rate of 44.1 Khz with 16 bits of resolution -- that's compact disc quality! It even samples in stereo. Once a sample is made, it can be played back at the push of a button. You can cut, copy, and paste portions of a sample. You can even do mixing, looping, or modify the actual waveform freehand.

The ADAP system replaces some super-sophisticated musical sampling equipment by allowing you to "play" the samples from your MIDI keyboard, polyphonically, with up to eight voices going simultaneously.

- On a one-megabyte machine, allows 80 seconds of sampling at full 16-bit linear resolution at 10 Khz. Allows 20 seconds at 44.1 Khz.
- Fully MIDI compatible
- Polyphonic
- Storage of up to 64 multi-samples in memory for instant playback.
- Real-time digital effects processing (delay, echo, reverb, etc.)
- Real-time oscilloscope
- Direct from compact disc, digital to digital sampling.
- Multi-sample keyboard splits.
- Compatible with the new MIDI digital sample dump data standard. Will work with data from

other MIDI sampling devices.
- 19" black rack-mount case.
- Suggested retail price is $1,995.

When asked why they chose the Atari ST as the host sytem, Frank Foster, president of Hybrid Arts, replied: "It's not like we actually 'chose' Atari. It simply couldn't be done on any other machine. Not on an Amiga. Not on a Macintosh." Now that's a compliment.

Other music news: Electronic Music Publishing House has MIDIPLAY, a real-time MIDI record/playback system which supports all 16 channels of MIDI information. List price is $49.95, and a demo disk is $5. They also have Musidisks, a series of pre-recorded data disks of everything from Bach to the Beatles. List is $19.95.

NEW SOFTWARE

The Catalog software division of Antic Publishing was showing, center stage at the Atari Booth, the 3-D StereoTek Liquid Crystal Shutter Glasses along with some spectacular demos of upcoming software. The new releases include Wanderer, a point-of-view space game, CAD-3D 2.0, CyberMate, the much anticipated stereo modeling and animation system, a molecular modeling program, and Stereo Maps & Legends. Certainly the most impressive demo was the world-premiere of Tom Hudson's SteelyBoink!, a stereo ray-tracing demo illustrating a simulated depth of 8-10 inches into the ST's monitor.

WordPerfect, the best selling and highest rated full-feature word processor for the IBM PC, is now (almost) a reality on the ST. It is GEM based, using menu bars and windows, but it also supports the full array of keyboard commands familiar to users of the IBM version. Additionally, users moving from the IBM to the Atari version will also benefit from full file compatiblity with WordPerfect 4.1.

WordPerfect supports footnote and endnote compilation, full keystroke macros, automatic calculation of numeric tables with the built-in math mode, complete database merge capabilities, an outline feature, a nine-keyword sorting facility for alphabetizing lists, a 115,000 word dictionary, including legal and medical terms, a five-level table of contents and index generator, a five newspaper-style columnar display, a sophisticated thesaurus, a three-level undo capability, and a virtual memory data system, allowing data to flow onto disk when computer memory is full.

WordPerfect for the Atari is scheduled for release second quarter, 1987. The suggested retail price is $395, although a representative from WordPerfect indicated Atari users should be able to purchase it in the low $200s.

Timeworks has released their three powerful productivity software for the ST: Word Writer ST, a word processor, Data Manager ST, and Swiftcalc ST, a spreadsheet. The Timeworks programs are designed as an integrated package. Suggested retail is $79.95.

Although not as numerous or as flashy as the new ST software, there were several companies showing software or distributing information for the 8-bit Atari line. Zobian Controls was promoting RAOS (Rat Actuated Operating System), their operating system giving your XE a GEM-like OS, including pull-down windows, a mouse-controlled arrow-pointer, and icons. Zobian also has improved their mouse, originally called the Rat. The SuperRAT is now a two-button digital mouse, which works in conjunction with the Zobian DESKTOP program Z-DOS (included in RAOS). The SuperRAT/RAOS combination sells for $99.00.

With somewhat less fanfare, Atari also announced a new slimline 20-megabyte Winchester drive for its ST line, incorporating an extra port for daisy-chaining with other DMA-compatible peripherals, such as the new laser printer. At the same time, Atari announced price reductions on existing ST models. A 520ST CPU will now be available for under $300 retail, a 1040ST with monochrome monitor for around $799, and a 1040ST with color monitor for around $999.

Atari Technical

For XL or XE ONLY, here's an easy way to speed up your cursor. If you type "POKE 728,15:POKE 730,1", you'll get a really fast keyboard. Memory address 728 controls how long to wait after a key is pressed before repeating the character. Memory address 730 controls the speed of the repeat.

Got an OkiMate 10 (or 20) color printer and aren't very happy about the color screen dumps? The pictures CAN be improved! Your first option is to change the paper brand. I found that BROTHER PLAIN PAPER works even better than the paper that OkiMate sells you - Plus it's cheaper. 250 sheets of paper from OkiMate costs $10, but 1000 sheets of BROTHER paper costs around $8! Another way is a little tricky- after the dump is complete, place the picture in a warm oven for about a minute. If the paper curls a bit in the oven, place something on each corner of the paper, like a spoon. The wax will melt into each other and make bolder, more solid outlines! If you leave it in too long, the letters will melt into each other.

Last Hacks

RRATED
From GEnie BBS and G.R.A.S.P. Gazette

Micro was a real-time operator and dedicated multi-user. His broad-band protocol made it easy for him to interface with numerous input/output devices, even if it meant time-sharing.

One evening he arrived home just as the sun was crashing, and had parked his Motorola 68000 in the main drive (he had missed the 5100 bus that morning), when he noticed an elegant piece of liveware admiring the daisy wheels in his garden. He thought to himself, "She looks user-friendly. I'll see if she'd like an update tonight."

Mini was her name, and she was delightfully engineered with eyes like COBOL and a Prime mainframe architecture that set Micro's peripherals networking all over the place.

He browsed over to her casually, admiring the power of her twin, 32-bit floating point processors and inquired "How are you, Honeywell?" "Yes, I am well," she responded, batting her optical fibers engagingly and smoothing her console over her curvilinear functions.

Micro settled for a straight line approximation. "I'm stand-alone tonight," he said. "How about computing a vector to my base address? I'll output a byte to eat, and maybe we could get offset later on."

Mini ran a priority process for 2.6 milliseconds, then transmitted "8K, I've been dumped myself recently, and a new page is just what I need to refresh my disks. I'll park my machine cycle in your background and meet you inside." She walked off, leaving Micro admiring her solenoids and thinking, "Wow, what a global variable. I wonder if she'll like my firmware."

They sat down at the process table to a top-of-form feed of fiche and chips and a bucket of Baudot. Mini was in conversational mode and expanded on ambiguous arguments while Micro gave occasional acknowledgements, although, in reality, he was analyzing the shortest and least critical path to her entry point. He finally settled on the old "Would you like to see my benchmark subroutine," but Mini was again one step ahead.

Suddenly, she was up and stripping off her parity bits to reveal the full functionality of her operating system software. "Let's get BASIC, You RAM," she said. Micro was loaded by this stage, but his hardware policing module had a processor of its own and was in danger of overflowing its output buffer, a hang-up that Micro had consulted his analyst about. "Core," was all he could say.

Micro soon recovered, however, when she went down on the DEC and opened her device files to reveal her data set ready. He accessed his fully packed root device and was just about to start pushing her CPU stack, when she attempted an escape sequence.

"No, no!" she piped. "You're not shielded."

"Reset, Baby," he replied. "I've been debugged."

But I haven't got my current loop enabled, and I can't support child processes," she protested.

"Don't run away," he said, "I'll generate an interrupt."

"No, that's too error prone, and I can't abort because of my design philosophy."

Micro was locked in by this stage, though, and he could not be turned off. But she soon stopped his thrashing by introducing a voltage spike into his main supply, whereupon he fell over with a head crash and went to sleep.

"Computers," she thought as she compiled herself, "All they ever think of is HEX."

"I think I found the human in your code."

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Atari News

G.R.A.S.S. is growing on MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE... or something like that. The GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS user group (about 95 strong) makes the 8th group to join our publication. Look for lots more information and local input from them as they "get in the groove" with the rest of us Michigan ATARI users.

8-BIT EMULATOR for the ST a REALITY! But can it ever be released? See story inside!

The ATARI IBM CLONES may NOT be a reality, on the other hand... for a while, anyway. Two problems are are the major hangups: negotiations for GEM for the machine, and FCC acceptance. Neither area has had any positive movement, despite ATARI's optomistic projected "spring '87" release of the $500 do-it-all PC compatible. The GEM interface, owned by DIGITAL RESEARCH Inc., would make over 700 ST titles directly portable to the machine, but according to DRI, no agreement is near on the licensing of the interface. Additionally, FCC type acceptance is neccesary for any commercial computer product, a process that can take literally forever, but never less than about 40 days. ATARI hasn't even APPLIED for approval, since there is not yet a finished production model. Industry observers note that the announcement has seriously turned down the purchases of the ST machines, and that the lost sales cannot be made up for within the ATARI line because the new machine isn't ready. This is exactly how OSBORNE COMPUTER CORP put themselves out of business a few years ago.

ATARIFESTs for Detroit and Chicago are in trouble. After a long seige of difficulty in negotiations with ATARI, Detroit's 400-plus member M.A.C.E. club threw up their hands and pulled out of the effort, cancelling a planned August '87 show for the Southfield Civic Center. Before the body was cold, the competing Detroit area ATARI club, MAGIC about 90 memeber strong, contacted ATARI and took up the torch. They even got SANDY AUSTIN, ATARI's user group contact, to come to Detroit to discuss it. Hard feelings abound at M.A.C.E., since they had not been able to even get Sandy to return some of their calls. What next? Film at 11:00. In CHICAGO, union costs MAY cancel their ATARIFEST. Requirements that UNION employees carry all equipment, set up anything electrical, etc. have driven projected costs through the roof.

MORE PANIC IN DETROIT: ANTIC MAGAZINE's publisher Jim Capperell wrote to Detroit's M.A.C.E. to notify them that they had to remove any and all ANTIC programs from their BBS. He reaffirmed that they are copyrighted, and to exchange them is PIRACY. Despite previous "understandings" about such things, it now looks like ANTIC wants to play hardball. Nothing was said in the letter about library inclusions of ANTIC material, but that is probably next. This will be quite a blow to many smaller clubs that have had almost nothing else in their club library but ANTIC and ANALOG material. ANALOG went on record last year saying that their materials could not be disrtibuted BEFORE THE PUBLICATION DATE of the magazine. Does ANTIC really think they are likely to sell many of their older disks this way? Looks like ANTIC wants to be like SOFTSIDE magazine... hard to deal with, then gone altogether.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH: WORD PROCESSORS (8 AND 16 BIT)

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Editor's Note

Rich Barnes
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This month, we would like to welcome the Atari Club of Grand Rapids into our Michigan Atari Magazine family. We now encompass almost all of the Michigan Atari Organizations except for the notable exceptions of M.A.C.E. and M.A.G.I.C., both of the Detroit Area. This wide ranging territory provides both the reader base necessary to give an advertiser some value for their advertising dollar and also provides the variety of interest and submissions necessary to keep it interesting.

If you read an ad that offers something of interest, even if it is only a free catalogue, please remember to mention our name. The only way that the advertiser can judge the success of their advertising is through your response. This response is important to them and to us so that they continue their advertising with our publication.

We all want a larger publication with more articles. We are at present negotiating with all of the clubs to try to accomplish this goal. We hope to maintain the size of this issue or even be able to increase the size in the future. However, to do this, we will need your cooperation. We can't do it alone...

If you have any questions or comments, please drop us a line by mail or through the C.H.A.O.S. BBS.

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

Rumors

THAT WAS THE ATARI EMULATOR THAT WAS
by JOHN NAGY (C.H.A.O.S.)

An "800" emulator for the ST is a reality! I have seen it and talked to the author. DAREK MIHOCKA of the LONDON, ONTARIO area, has written and distributed several levels of beta test versions on BBS's. He originally planned to make a emulator for just about all the 6502 machines, but has since broken the emulations into separate versions for the APPLE][, the ATARI, and soon the COMMODORE 64. (YIKE!).

The version I saw ran no graphics and did not support DOS functions. But in a telephone interview on February 22, Darek, a 20 year old college student at Waterloo University outside Toronto, told me that he has now developed the emulation to produce all graphics modes, DOS support, and even DISPLAY LISTS! Still to be developed are PLAYER MISSLE GRAPHICS and SOUND. Additionally, there seems to be a string-handling bug in the ATARI 8-bit BASIC emulation but Darek expects to have that corrected shortly. Ultimately he plans to have the emulation good enough to run commercial heavy-graphics software.

At this point, the emulation runs about 1/4 the speed of "normal" 8-bit execution as the emulation is an interpreter Plans for commercial distribution (and in fact ANY distribution) are now sketchy, because of... guess who?

ATARI CORP. ... who WON'T allow the emulator to be distributed. The problem is that Darek's program uses the ATARI (copyrighted) operating system and ATARI BASIC. ATARI says this is PIRACY and has threatened suit if the emulator gets out. Real user-friendly, this company!

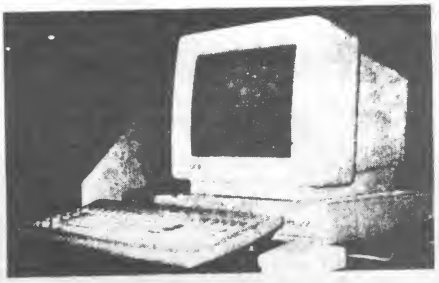
Mihocka is trying to get around this objection by devising a program that will extract the required data out of the user's own 8-bit ATARI machine, port it to the ST, and integrate it into his emulator... but even this may not be satisfactory to ATARI. "They tell me that it will encourage piracy..." says Mihocka, who contacted ATARI about his work when XANTH (a Seattle area software company-- remember BOINK?) expressed commercial interest in the 8-bit emulator.

All is not lost, perhaps. Mihocka is re-writing many routines into 68000 machine code (as he had to do for printer support, as the ST does not have the 8-bit type daisy-chain cable). If he is able to replace enough routines, the speed of the emulation will dramatically increase, and the need for the

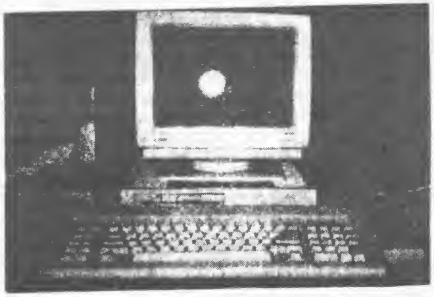
ATARI ROM will decrease. Then, BIG JACK won't be able to say much about the emulator.

We thought is was unfortunate (and even ATARI seemed to agree) when APPLE was unco-operative about ROMS for the MAGIC-SAC MACINTOSH emulator. Now the shoe is on ATARI's own other foot and they are being just as difficult. Lets hope this one can be resolved above-board. Write to Jack Tramiel and tell him what you think of his company's opposition to the development of what many of us have been waiting for- a way to avoid losing all our hard-earned software when we buy the ATARI ST.

Look for more on this story in future issues of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE.



The ATARI MEGA ST, shown at the LAS VEGAS CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW, to be available mid-1987.



The ATARI PC CLONE, also shown at the C.E.S., which may be MUCH later in making its appearance (see story on front page).

Atari Technical

1050 DRIVE BLUES: Get a SLOWWWW boot error, or sometimes just cant get the #%$'# thing to read? The most LIKELY problem is NO DISK ROTATION. This can be due to belt problems, a loose flywheel, or insufficient SQUEEZE on the disk. Diagnosing the belt problem is easy once you open the drive, just look at what is happening when the motor runs. Sometimes the belt is lying in the bottom of the drive. Sometimes, it looks ok but won't stay on anymore! New belts are hard to find, try buying a small "O" ring that can replace the belt. If the flywheel center attaching screw is loose, that's another easy fix. The hard one to tell about is when the disk just sn't being squeezed enough by the turn-down hadle mechanism to grip and turn the disk reliably. I put a few thicknesses of paper lables under the part that pushes down when the handle is moved to see if it would grip tighter. It worked so well, I haven't gone back in to see if there is another way to increase the grip... but I suppose the paper will someday wear out. That's soon enough for me.

8-bit DOS ON A CART: Spartados from ICD is not the only player in the DOSCART game anymore... and the competition is coming from MICHEAL WHEELER of ALASKA. He has put ATARI DOS 2.5 on a cart and added true double density support and a ramdisk handler. Although it is memory-greedy (16k when resident), the cart can be switched out manually. Another switch handles BASIC in or out. This looks like a basement operation, as plans and code for eprom burning yourself are available for $5, and we don't have a price on finished carts. Contact MICHEAL E. WHEELER, P.O. Box 104013, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, 99510.

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S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.		
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4160
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-3590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

First off, let me urge you to come to the March 8-bit meeting. The first half of the meeting will be a General Meeting of Chaos, the official Annual Meeting. Except for the 16-bit Member at Large, all officers will be elected at this meeting. So, whether you are an 8-bit member or a 16-bit member, if you want a voice in how things are run, and who runs them, come to this meeting.

8-bit members, please note, you are especially in need of a Member at Large. If you are someone who can represent the interests of the "average" 8-bit user, step forward. You can make a difference.

You may have noticed that I differentiated between the 8-bit meeting, and the General Meeting. At a recent meeting of the Board of Directors, and the Activities Board, I suggested that it was time to further integrate the ST and its owners into the club. One minor way to do this is to stop treating the 8-bit meeting as a

general meeting but instead as the Special Interest Group meeting that it is. The idea was well received, so as of now the meeting on the third Saturday of the month is the 8-bit SIG while the ST SIG will continue to take place on the second Saturday.

General meetings will now be announced and replace all or part of a SIG meeting. For instance, the Annual Meeting will replace part of the 8-bit SIG meeting. The Auction may replace October's 16-bit SIG meeting, etc.

This change also gives me a chance to have a contest. The 8-bit SIG needs a snappy name. Whoever comes up with the best one, as judged by the Board of Directors, will get 2 library disks of their choice free!!

There have been some other changes taking place recently as well. Mark Smathers has resigned as the ST Disk Librarian. Thank you, Mark, for your contributions of time and effort.

Since his resignation we have begun making some important changes in the management and organization of the ST Library. John Baker, our Library Manager, is now responsible for the entire Chaos library, 8-bit and the 16-bit software alike. This will facilitate communication with other clubs, as well as consistency in the organization, upkeep, and maintenance of the library.

John's is a position of management though and he needs assistance with the nuts and bolts things such as disk copying, demonstrations, reviews of submissions, and etc. Malcolm Cleveland and Sally Nagy are ably assisting with the 8-bit section. But HELP IS NEEDED for the 16-bit section.

Other volunteers are needed from among the 16-bit owners as well. Chet Kapusinski recently volunteered to assist with the Publications Library, but we still need someone to help with membership at the 16-bit meetings. Call me today and offer your help.

Meeting Minutes

February ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the second Saturday of each month. At the February meeting we had 25 people attended, a larger than usual turnout. We have also worked out a "standard" equipment set up, with one ST connected to the overhead TV's for demos, and another ST with 2 disk drives for the disk library.

The ST library has over 35 FULL disks, and is in pretty good shape, but our librarian resigned. We also need more workers in many categories. March is the CHAOS election, and while the ST SIG will only be electing a board member, we will be looking for volunteers and draftees for a variety of jobs. Chet Kapusinski volunteered to be publications librarian, so bring any ST books and magazines that you wish to donate at the next meeting. John Johnson demo'd the AEGIS PLAYER, which plays animation that is created by AEGIS ANIMATOR. The Player is a public domain program, while the Animator is a purchased product. Later in the meeting WORLD GAMES was demo'd (played) by several people.

Besides the usual talk of bulletin boards, mail order vendors, and prices, emulators for 8-bit computers seems a hot topic. Rumors abound of emulators for the Atari 800 and Apple II. Scott Evans showed a beta version of an 800 BASIC emulator, which seems to run some text programs OK, and support some PEEK's and POKE's (no graphics). If anyone could write a complete emulator for the 800, supporting vertical blank timing, display lists, ANTIC and POKEY chip functions, it would amaze me! My test of such an emulator would be M.U.L.E. If I could run MULE on my ST, I'd buy the emulator in a minute. (How would they emulate the other 2 joystick ports?)

ST tip: Chet said that he had often been losing files, having them come up with size of 0, or error when he tried to load them. For a while, he suspected a hardware problem with his disk drive. He's discovered, however, that some of the littler users of his ST may be accidently copying files onto themselves (if your finger slips while you're dragging a file, you might drop it on the same drive window). COPYING A FILE ONTO ITSELF MAY CORRUPT THE DIRECTORY. Always CANCEL if this happens.

Closing tip: Last month I described how to connect your 800 to the ST, and transfer ascii files across. Once on the ST, the file will have 8-bit end-of-line codes instead of carriage returns, and it's necessary to have carriage returns for ST BASIC or word processing. On the ST, the atascii EOL appears as the cent sign(¢). Using ST Writer 1.50, the following is an easy way to convert all the EOL characters to CR.

LOAD the file, EDIT. SHIFT-F7 (replace) ALT-X (allows special character) CONTROL-[(control left bracket is the atascii end of line) ESC RETURN ESC

An 18k text file takes about 2 minutes to convert.

ST ya next month.

8-Bit Meeting Notes
By: Gary Ferris

About 60 people attended the February meeting which was down from what we're used to, but the weather outside was super for this time of year, so I imagine many people were relieving their cabin fever.

Opening discussion centered on the new Atari PC clone which is apparantly to be delayed, and on the problems which have led to the cancellation and rescheduling of the Detriot Atari show which had been scheduled for August.

John Nagy brought up the fact that we have a great need of someone to help with advertising for the Michigan Atari Magazine.

March is election month so be sure to come and cast your vote for the officers of your choice.

Guy Hurt demoed a program called Heartware and John Nagy had another fine Disk of the Month.

John also demoed the new MIO box by ICD which is that rarest of things:
A product which is actually far better than the ads claim.

The treasury stands at a healthy balance of $1165.67.

Telecom

The C.H.A.O.S. DOWNLOAD
by JOHN NAGY

Some things take longer than others. I keep telling myself that to make myself feel better about not having the HARD DRIVE working yet on the CHAOS BBS.

After quite a delay, ICD Corp finally caught up to our order for three MIO boxes (placed mid DECEMBER, delivered mid FEBRUARY). I can't blame them, they are making them as fast as they can-- the things are just too popular! I am using one now on my own system, and it has radically changed the way I use my computer... or at least the productivity I get out of it!

...But the HARD DRIVE (which we ordered at the same time and got delivery before Christmas) was not able to be tested until the MIO came... and NOW we found it is defective and has to be sent back. So, we will not likely have the hard drive YET online by the time you get this issue of Michigan ATARI Magazine. Sorry.

We HAVE had a lot of activity online lately. We crossed caller # 20,000 on February 22, almost exactly two years since we went online with the ancestor of the current software and began at zero. Only 9 1/2 months ago we had caller #10,000, so the count is accellerating.

Another round of CLUE! was just completed online in one of the message bases, this time on a STAR TREK theme. It turned out that DR. McCOY was guilty of SABOTAGE in the TRANSPORTER ROOM. YIKE! Another game will be forming, I am sure. They run about 2 weeks, and are a LOT of fun, even just to drop in and read.

We took a poll on users of the CHAOS BBS and discovered that a full third of all users are calling us by long distance. That's a lot, considering that we are NOT in an area code served by PC-PURSUIT for incoming calls! SOMEDAY, we MAY have to consider going MULTI-LINE so that more people can get on. We also discovered that three quarters of our users are a member of SOME computer club somewhere.

Lastly, a commercial of sorts: a Detroit area mail order firm called "1-800-FLOPPYS" is offering a 1200 Baud standard HAYES compatible modem for $49.99... the catch is that you need to buy the "communication kit" for $60 to be eligible for the modem price. The "kit" includes... a cable. Yup, that's all! But still, I took a chance and ordered one... $125.29 (C.O.D.) and 2 weeks later, I had a SMARTEAM modem! If you don't know about them, they are amoung the BEST quality compatible modem made, and regularly sell for $200 (without a cable!). I'm VERY happy. I hope they will become an advertiser here in the magazine... in the mean time, you can get a jump on the deal by calling them at 313-552-3036 (the 800 number only works OUTSIDE Michigan). But you have to promise you heard about it in THIS MAGAZINE!!!

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

OTHER LANSING AREA COMPUTER CLUBS

CLUB	COMPUTER	CONTACT	PHONE #
Apple LUG	Apple	Gary Martin	394-0115
CCUG	Color Comp	Dale Knepper	626-6917
CMARC	Ama.Radio	Bill Hineman	323-2914
COMP KLUB	Texas Ins.	John Hayes	882-7860
DECUS	DEC	C.M. Watson	483-1111
DRUG	DEC Rainbow	Jeff Weihl	349-6967
Epson Users	Epson	Ted Bozarth	332-3710
LACC	Commodore	Jae Walker	351-7061
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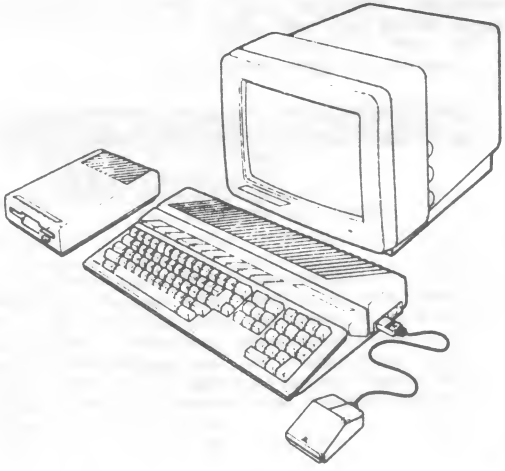

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Presidential Address

Presidential Mumblings for March 1987
by Jim Steele

Welcome to the March GAG pages! I've got a favor to ask of you this time. Well, two favors actually. First, please check the expiration date on your newsletter. It comes right after the GAG. I try to note on the label when you're due for renewal,but I may miss some of them. As always if paying by check it should be written to your friendly president.

The second favor is a rehash of my comments at the last meeting. We need your input on activities for the meetings. It seems that the amount of new software for the venerable 8-bitters is waning. I've noticed this in both the commercial and Public Domain areas. I even get the impression that Atari doesn't care much either. For whatever reasons, we need to come up with something to do here! Your suggestions are needed. Leave a message on the boards, send up a smoke signal or whatever.

The minutes department.

Turnout was a little light at the January meeting. Those who braved the cold learned about the cancelation of the Detroit 'Taricon. Modem users have since learned that reports of it's demise were premature. The other Detroit group may be picking up the gauntlet. At the March meeting we will discuss possible GAG involvement with the show.

That's it for March's mumblage, see you next time,

-Jim

Next Meetings:

March 11,1987	6:30pm regular meeting
March 28,1987	9:30am Saturday session
April 8,1987	6:30pm regular
April 25,1987	9:30am Saturday

ST Report

ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

Interest in the ST seems to be mushrooming in the Flint area. Many who have been hanging on the fence for the past six months or so have finally taken the plunge and purchased an ST system. Support from retailers is growing and it is no longer necessary to travel to Detroit or purchase through a mail order company to get the latest ST software. The future looks bright.

Even longtime 8 bit stalwart, Jerry Cross has recently purchased an ST. Can a local ST BBS be far behind?

As announced at the February meeting there is now a new pricing structure for the GAG ST library disks depending on how many disks that you buy:
1 disk - $4
2 - 9 disks - $3 each
10 or more disks - $2.50

The response at the February meeting was tremendous and it looks like the ST library is finally in the black which will allow us to expand the ST portion of the group even more.

For March there will be approximately 4 new disks for your consumption. As promised there will be a disk of Printmaster icons containing about 300 different graphics with some assorted utilities. I have finally gathered enough Aegis Animator files to fill more than 1 disk. Look for at least one Aegis disk in March.

Since the arrival of GFA Basic there has been a renewed interest in Basic programming. The speed of GFA Basic lends itself to all sorts of applications including arcade type games. I still have trouble believing that GFA Basic is an interpreted language...it's so fast! I recently ran the Creative Computing benchmark on GFA to see how it would perform in relation to 140 other computers. The times were

astounding. The list of computers was a couple of years old so some of the newer machines such as the Amiga and ST were not listed, however GFA Basic and the ST finished in 5th place trailing only the Cray 1, Amdahl 470, DEC System 10, and the DEC VAX 11/780. I wonder who would program a Cray in Basic?

Eamon, a fantasy role playing series of game modules is being converted to GFA Basic. The initial module and the Beginning Cave is finished and will be available on a GAG disk in March in both tokenized Basic and compiled forms. Another disk will contain numerous GFA Basic programs that can serve as excellent tutorial references for those interested in programming in GFA. I've heard that True Basic is being ported to ST, so it seems that closet Basic programmers will have a multitude of Basic dialects to choose from in the future. Fast Basic, a cartridge from England, has been getting rave reviews from that country and should soon be showing up in the U.S. The beauty of GFA lies in it's structured programming style and the public domain run time module which allows those who don't own the language to enjoy the programs.

There will also be at least one general purpose disk which will contain a variety of games, utilities, and demos. Of particular interest is a playable demo of a game from Paradox, Haunted. This will keep the kids' joysticks busy.

Your continued support of the GAG ST disk library means a continuing flow of excellent public domain programs in the future.

National Computer Clinic is interested in hosting User Group meetings at their facilities on Bristol Road. A big advantage to having the meeting there is the availabilty of ST systems so that members will not have to lug their systems around. National has several rooms that are more than adaquate for our needs. I'm thinking of having a future Saturday morning workshop session there. We will talk about this at the March meeting.

Disk Library

Disks for March

Well, I got some good stuff this month. No, REALLY!! Not like that junk last month, but some good stuff! No kidding! And it might even run properly too!

Thanks to the Cleveland Atari Computer Enthusiests, we now have several disks formerly sold commercially by Shangri-La. These programs have been offered to CACE for distribution, and they sent them to us for some trades.

DISK #172-Old Mother Hubbard's G Chip Cookbook is a graphics demo program that creates some nifty designs on the screen. You can use several screen dump programs to make hard copies.

Disk #173-Shopper's Helper. This program contains a large list of items you would find at the grocery story. You are shown each item one at a time, then given the change to add or modify your choice. For example, if you live in San Francisco, you may want to specify the type of cereal (Fruit-Loops) or whatever. When you are through it prints out a handy shopping list.

Disk #174-Beneath The Pyramid. This is a graphics adventure Game. Work your way around the kingdom, search for treasures, and buy weapons to ward off evil dragons and wizards.

Disk #175-Digital Visions #1. A collection of Computereyes pictures taken from TV movies like the Wizard of Oz. Nicely done, gives me a few ideas of my own. Who's got that Computereyes equipment now.....?

Disk #176-Telecommunications. For you folks with an ACE-80 cartridge, here is a terminal program that will allow you to have 80 columns. I haven't been able to locate a cartridge to test this program out, but it seems to run ok in 40 column mode.

Disk #177+178-More AMS music files from the Pittsburg Atari Group (PACE).

Disk #179-RLE Pictures. This is the first of several RLE pictures disks (Hi-Res pictures) from Compuserve.

Disk #180-RLE Utilities disk. This disk contains programs to view and/or convert pictures. You can make Koala pictures into RLE pictures or vise-versa. Also included is OMNIVIEW, a program to view many different formats of pictures (RLE, Koala, Rambrandt, etc...)

Disk #181-DANDY. This is a very good arcade adventure game. You must work your way through a multi-level maze, find the keys to the next level, and avoid the droids.

Next month, I will have more of the CACE disks, and I hope to have another batch of traded disks to search through also.

See you at the next meeting.

CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-4599
P-R Chairman	William Locke	782-6873
Membership Coord.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

Meeting Minutes

SECRETARY REPORT

by Joe Cripps

Hello everyone. Another month has gone by and another meeting. Discussions this month revolved around the CACE Computer Fair, which will have been successfully completed by the time this is published. I would like to thank Scott Boland and Bob Kingsbury for all of the time and effort that these two committed members of our organization put into the planning of the fair.

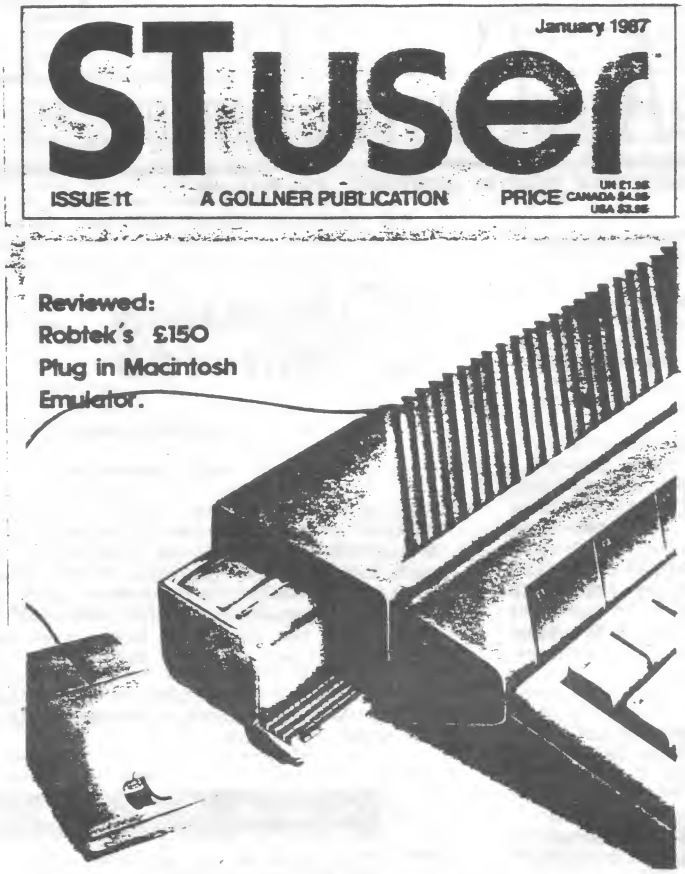
That is all for this month. I hope to see you all at the next meeting. It would be great to see some new faces.

TREASURERS REPORT

by Scott Boland

As of February 8th the C.A.C.E. treasury contains $154.74 in petty cash and $394.65 in the bank account. This gives us a grand total of $549.39 in the treasury. Between getting ready for the computer faire and working out of town, I can't seem to get caught up with anything.

I would like to welcome three new members to the club. They are, Randall Westcott, Andy Stutz, and Chuck Hubbs. I am sure you will enjoy the club as much as I do. Well, that's it for this month. Let's have a great turnout at the computer faire. See you all there.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Robtek's £150
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Emulator.
Logistix - Spreadsheet, Database, Business Graphics, plus a forth dimension.
Flight Simulator II - Take off into the sky blue pixels of your colour monitor!
Programming - The start of a new series on Fast Basic

CONTENTS

NEWS AND EDITORIAL
PLUG IN MAGIC
DEGAS ELITE
FLIGHT SIMULATOR II
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FAST BASIC UPDATE
GEM FROM FAST BASIC
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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

March 14th at 2:00 pm.
April 11th at 2:00 pm.

Presidential Address

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, here it is, spring time again! TAG has survived another year along with Atari, and both have emerged stronger and healthier than ever. Atari has nearly repaid the huge debt owed to Warner Brothers, and still made a profit in 1986! Our club has grown from 38 to 48 members this past year, and the club treasury looks fairly healthy. Look for software raffles frequently in the near future.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley....President/(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt....Treasurer/Sec./(517)792-6029
Al Jennings.....8-bit Disk Lib./(517)790- 1980
Lance Middleton.ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman.....Asst. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Mid- Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

This month we'll be covering Word Processors (and related accessories). On the ST side, HabaWriter II, by Haba Systems, (a little known, but dynamite word processor!) will be demoed by LeRoy Valley and Thunder!, by Batteries Included will be demoed by Dan Barrowman. HabaWriter II is packed with features and is still the only WP I've seen that supports TRUE footnotes. Thunder! is a spelling checker that can be run as a stand alone application or as a desktop accessory. It works with ANY text file!

On the 8-bit side, Marty Schmidt volunteered to demo Letter Perfect on an 80 column screen. He has an Omniview chip in his 130XE which supports 80 columns on a monitor. Included with the Omniview chip is the necessary instructions to patch Letter Perfect and Data Perfect for 80 column operation and a free 80 column word processor, Speed Script. Marty will also highlight some of the features of the free WP.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

Meeting Minutes

RELICS TO RELISH

We had a huge turnout for the February meeting! Possibly the biggest we've had all year! We started the meeting on a good note by approving the motion to have a raffle for the April meeting. The club will purchase the following two packages:

ST: 10th Frame, by Activision 8-bit: The Pawn, by Firebird

Both of these packages will be demoed by club members, and then raffled off. Remember!, you have to be a club member to participate in the club raffles.

We then discussed possible ways to promote our club. It was suggested that we might be able to put up a display in one of the area malls on a weekend to let people know that we exist. Since the meeting Char Davis called both the Hampton and Fashion Square Malls. Fashion Square is not interested, but Hampton Mall would be interested if we could get other area groups to participate in a joint Computer show. I'll try contacting other club presidents in the area to get their reactions.

After getting all of the necessary nonsense out of the way, we dived into the demo portion of the meeting! Marty Schmidt started off by showing Basic XL by OSS, and Turbo Basic, a public domain basic in our club library. He compared both to the old yardstick, Atari Basic. Basic XL supports many features not found on Atari Basic. Some of these features include:

* String Arrays * Renumber command * Find (to find a character in a string) * Fast (lets program run faster!) * Block delete of line numbers * Double peek and poke * and much, much more!!

Marty claims that any serious basic program mer (are there really any SERIOUS program mers?) can't live without Basic XL. The only faults that he can find with it are the cost (about $40), and the UGLY orange cartridge (which he conveniently hides in the back of his 130XE).

Marty then talked about Turbo Basic, which supports many of the same features that Basic XL does. In addition, it has a compiler that converts a Turbo Basic program into psuedo- code (at least I can spell it Marty!). This psuedo-code, which must be executed through a run time package, runs nearly as fast as machine code! Marty showed several programs, first on Atari Basic, then on Basic XL, and finally on Turbo Basic. In all cases, Turbo Basic blew the other two away (from a speed standpoint)! The best part of Turbo Basic is that it's free!

LeRoy Valley then demoed MegaMax C for the ST. Megamax allows the user to run all necessary programs from a GEM based program which Megamax calls the "shell". The editor supplied with MegaMax has a great deal of features, but one annoying bug kept me from using the supplied editor. It didn't support the arrow keys! Every time that I wanted to move to a different portion of text, I had to reach for the mouse, and it became a pain in the you-know-what! I have recently learned that MegaMax has corrected that deficiency, and am eagerly awaiting my update. Mean while, I'm using a public domain program called ST EDT. If any of you have ever worked with EDT on a DEC, then you'll love this gem.

If any of you have ever worked with a high level language before and been dismayed over the slow compile and link times, your troubles are over! MegaMax C compiles and links VERY quickly! It even has a "make" facility to automatically recompile and relink an altered file. Similar programs were run on both ST Basic and MegaMax C, and (as you would expect) there was no compari son.

Marc Poisson finished off the demos with the LDW basic compiler. He just received the new version 1.1 prior to the meeting, so we saw the latest and greatest. The LDW compiler allows you to compile and link standard ST Basic programs. The result is stand alone executable machine code that runs consider ably faster! Marc compiled the demo ST Basic program that I used in my MegaMax demo, and the resulting program was nearly as fast as that produced by MegaMax C. Improvements in version 1.1 include faster compiles and links (it is VERY fast), and the ability to compile a larger number of basic programs. Marc says that it compiles everything he's tried. In the worst case, you may have to make some small modifications. The package is GEM driven, and looks excellent. For about $50, it looks like a good deal.

That concluded our February meeting! See you all at the next meeting.

JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Fred Stevens 2 Disk Drives
Marty Schmidt Monitor & 130 XE

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Paul Bork Monitor
LeRoy Valley 1040 ST

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.

Support your ATARI Clubs!!
Attend the monthly meetings,
Take part in the projects,
and your use and enjoyment
of your ATARI will grow with
your knowlege and experience!
GREAT CLUBS are part of what
makes POWER without the PRICE
More than just another motto!

BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

ATTENTION

NEW MEETING PLACE: VO-ED CENTER
Roosevelt Ave. Behind KCC.

NEW MEETING DAY: 2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH
March 12, 1987 7:00 PM

Presidential Address

by Chuck Steele

Our last meeting was busy. For those of you who missed the meeting we have decided to move future meetings to the Vo-ed Center. We also have voted to move the meetings up to the second Thursday of the month. This gives us a little more time to prepare our Newsletter articles. Thanks to all who returned your questionnaire. These changes will be a big improvement in meeting our growing needs.

Dan gave us a report on Antic visits Atari and a demo of his new interface. Next month Dan will be demoing his new Action Cartridge. I gave a demo of TAXHELPER 1986. This is an update of last years tax program that helps you get through the pain of Tax Time.

BCAUG is planning on adding an ST section to our library. We got a demo disk for the ST from Aladdin Disk Publishing. The 8 bit Aladdin is very impressive so we look forward to seeing this new 16 bit version, at the next meeting. We are also planning on buying some more commercial programs for our library.

Also let us welcome two new members to our group, Gorden Bennett and Victor Petty.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

Telecom

XM-301 BUG or MAYBE BIG TROUBLE

This is only an observation but might be of great importance to you who own and use ATARI's XM 301 modem.

As most of us know the XM 301 is a good cheap 300 baud modem. There were problems with the software that was supplied by ATARI for the 301 called XE TERM. This problem was easily conquered by just throwing this program away and using the public domain program "1030-XM301 EXPRESS". This solved 100% of any problem I was having with my modem and has never failed me at all.

It all started with a problem I have been having with my printer and interface, that is getting little squiggles at random throughout my graphics dumps and sometimes with ATARI-WRITER and of course ruining paper and patience. I borrowed another interface and the same problem popped up but I was paying a lot more attention and noticed a humming noise on my monitor while working on the process of narrowing things down to isolate my problem. I unplugged my 301 modem from the port of my borrowed U-PRINT interface and the humming stopped. Then I dumped a graphics picture to the printer with no problem, exchanged the borrowed interface for mine and again no problem. OBSERVATION:DON'T LEAVE YOUR XM301 PLUGGED INTO THE INTERFACE EXCEPT WHEN USING IT FOR COMMUNICATION.

This got me thinking about some problems a club member has had with his computer and disk drives that crashes. When Chuck had them repaired the service man had mentioned that his modem could have been the culprit for all his problems but did not know for sure or why. Also there was a small article in ANALOG I/O section about squiggly interference (the same as mine).

There is a suggested repair for the XM 301 modem which should cause it to use less power. Look for it in the technical tips elsewhere in this issue. This MAY resolve many problems with the modem.

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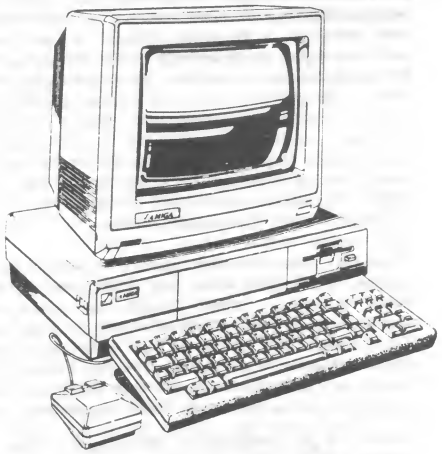
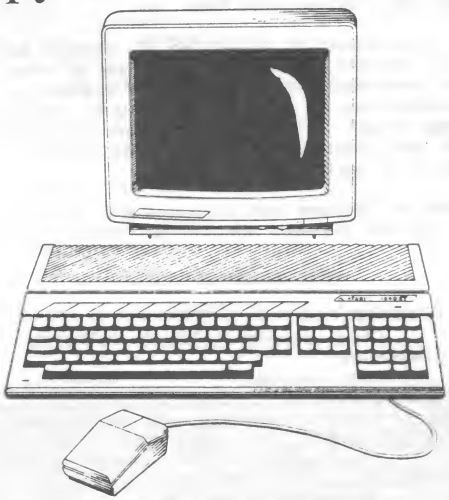




WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING ON MARCH 10 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting Minutes

REPORT ON 2/10/87 MEETING
BY MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Mike Pieronek spent a few minutes discussing some of Atari's upcoming release of new hardware. Mike also announced that, to increase efficiency and member interest, several of the WAUG library disks will be combined according to topic into two-sided disks. Mike will also attempt to contact other groups to become involved in an exchange program.

Mike is still charged up on the Erotosthenes Sieve Benchmark and has discovered that an Amiga programmer claims a 3/4 second speed record although this was accomplished by relocating the software into unusual memory areas that do not interact with the graphics system. Mike handed out copies of the code (written in 'C') and challenged the ST owners to show their Amiga counterparts how it's done 'by a real computer!'

Doug Feldman announced that there are 3 new disks in the library (and a temporary mixup in cataloging). Disk #W033 includes the ANTIC pic shuffling program. Disk #W034 is a collection of Basic games including The Wheel of Fortune. Disk #W035 is an Express Modem Simulator program written by Mike Olin.

The feature topic of the evening was Telecommunications. Mike Olin loaded the Express v3.0 (850-based) terminal program by Keith Ledbetter and discussed the differences between it and the earlier versions for the 1030, XM301, and MPP modems. Specifically, the main differences include an improved autodial system, screen dumps (to buffer or printer), word wrapping, a text edit window and a much larger (although machine dependent) capture buffer.

Mike then demonstrated his Express Modem Simulator program which tutors a first-time-caller through the motions of calling his BBS (MOLIN'S DEN) by simulating an actual call. This autobooting program, which was written in BASIC and does not require a modem, covered all menu options of the BBS by 'describing' the purpose of every function that is available (rather than actually performing the function) and included a realistic example of logging on, logging off, and downloading.

Bob Fritz booted up his version of AMIS and demonstrated his BBS (The Country Peddler) from the sysop's point of view. Bob has made some excellent improvements in the 'behind-the-scenes' operation of his BBS that include a display-interrupt status window and on-line maintenance systems. This BBS also supports a Dungeons and Dragons game area which Bob says could use more players.

Craig Harvey booted up his Clear Thinking (ST) BBS and showed some of the sysop functions and other features that make the Michtron BBS (v2.0) sysop-friendly. Craig noted the multitasking capability that allows him to perform some system functions WHILE a caller is online without the caller knowing he is there. As an example, he noted that a caller could be reading messages and Craig could concurrently enter a message to the online caller. It would appear as the last message entered. (Notice that the sysop's message would have a later posting time than the caller's own log-on time.) Craig also discussed the popularity of his 'Fantasy SIG 6' message base where callers are expected to attempt to maintain a secret identity.

Doug Feldman then demonstrated his BBS Raceway program and then briefly reviewed the primary features of the WAUG Express BBS. He noted that there was no option for describing downloads in detail so he has dedicated a separate message base to handle such information. The primary reason for the password requirement is to allow each caller to 'Quickscan' the message bases for new messages AND to send and receive private Email with other password holders. Currently there are 150 allocated passwords on the BBS.

Doug also mentioned his decision to retire as WAUG BBS sysop by June 1987. He is hoping that

another member of WAUG would be intested to assume this activity. WAUG owns copies of the 1030/XM and 850 versions of the BBS Express software.

The next meeting of WAUG will be held on March 10. The feature topic will be "Word Processing" and will include demonstrations of PaperClip XE, Letter Perfect, AtariWriter Plus and First Word. Discussion and/or demonstrations of other word processors is welcomed.

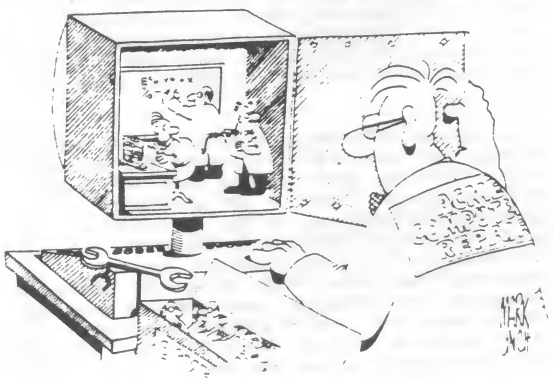
Disk Library

WAUG DISK LIBRARY NEWS
BY MIKE PIERONEK

I have started a major project to reorganize the WAUG 8-bit Disk Library. There are various disks devoted to similar topics that will be converted into 2-sided versions. Also I have received a generous donation of public domain disks from one of our new members, Al Jones. Furthermore, I am planning to contact other users' groups to discuss swapping library disks. The next several months should be exciting for WAUG Disk Library members. We will have a completely revised Disk Catalog available at the March 10 meeting. Be there or face chocolate death!

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

MAR 10 --- WORD PROCESSORS FOR ST & 8-BIT
APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES MARATHON
MAY 12 --- GRAPHICS EDITORS & PRINTERS
JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER SELECTIONS
NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST



The Australian Atari Gazette
(Melbourne)

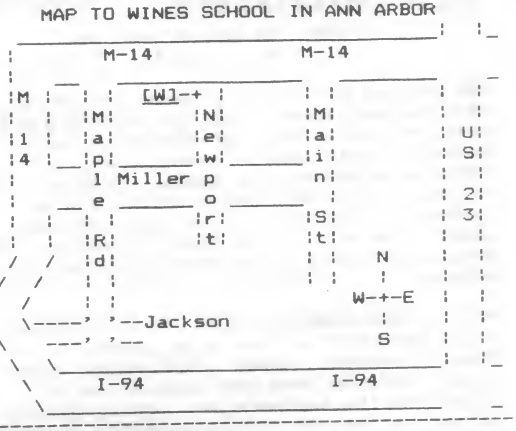
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

WAUG
WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

Dan Youngs 388-3164

I'm writing this article before our next meeting so its going to be hard to tell you what we discussed. So I'll tell you what I intend to go discuss.

First we (the officers) talked about the club sponsoring a local BBS here in town and every one thought that it was a good idea, but we would have to make an investment for a modem and BBS software. Please be thinking of ways to get more memory and disk drives. We have someone that said they would be interested in being our SYSOP but that this person wants to give it a try before fully committing themselves (can't really blame them).

Starting in Febuary we will be having themes for our different meetings. Febuary will be graphics, March will Taxes and Finance (I will be demonstrating Tax Advantage), April will Baseball!!! bring in your Baseball games. In May we will be working with telecommuniction, (hopefully we will have our BBS up and running). From there we are open to suggestions.

By our March meeting Steven should have the Library all done. We also have been Looking for other clubs to trade with, and I think we've found some.

Remember that our Analog disks are $2.00 and that we will attempt to have at least one new disk at each meeting for you to buy.

By this news letter we should be getting our MULE games going, so if your not on the list to play you better get on it!!!

We are having problems with advertising for our news letter. If you have a place that you buy your software or hardware from that isn't in the magazine, please ask them if they would support us.

The next meeting will be at Kalamzoo College Dewing Hall on March 14 at 2:00.

Disk Library

Disk Chief's Corner

I am Dave Oldenberg, and I am now Keeper Of the Disks for G.K.A.U.G.

I would like to remind everyone of the upcoming computer fair to be held at Kalamazoo Central high School on March 7. It's hours are 9a.m. to 3p.m. I hope everyone shows up, as last year was a good turnout!

If anyone has a great game or program that is public domain, give it to me at the meeting, or send it over the modem, and I can try to get it on the Club's monthly disk for everyone.

'til next month see you
bye!

David Oldenberg
(616)435-8262

Atari Technical

Fred's Hardware Emporium

I know, I know! Everyone is saying, "What new gizmo is Fred going to tell us we need for our computers now? After 256k of memory (which we will complete!) for our 800XL's, what else could there be?".

Have I got a deal for You ....

If I sat down and wrote a list of the things that really drive me crazy about my Atari, I think the first thing to come to mind would be the "RESET" key - I mean, how many times does it really work? Half of the time, the computer gets locked up so bad that a reset simply makes it worse. You'll say, "But all you have to do is turn the power off and on".

In all of the time that I have worked on computer systems, I have never seen anything worse for them than repeated power ups and downs. The I.C.'s themselves run warm (sometimes hot!). They will expand and contract with temperature, and at sometime or another can cause the I.C. to fail. Wouldn't it be nice if you could run a Basic program, and after you were done and wanted to play a game you could insert the disk and run it without ever powering the computer off? What if you have 256k in your machine - wouldn't it be nice to reboot at will, and not wait for the memory to "bleed off"?

I have found a way to remove one I.C. from your 800XL and replace it with one that has the ability to force a reboot at any time. Just think, you won't need to power up and down anytime the computer hangs up, or you want to run something else.

All that you need to do is replace one large I.C. in your computer. If the I.C.'s in your computer are in sockets, all the better. If not, a technician can put a socket in for you. The change is not permanent, and can be removed in minutes.

There will be no costs, other than you buying the chip. I will need to program it for you, however.

If you are interested (I would like to make it a user's group project), let me know at the meeting, or at home.

Fred Farleigh
(616)962-8229

"HURRY DEAR. WE DON'T WANT TO BE LATE FOR CHURCH!"

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THE NEWS STATION $26.95 Great
MUSIC SPECIALS
CASIO CZ-101 SYNTHESIZER $249.95
CASIO CZ-1000 SYNTHESIZER $359.95
EZ*CZ Cartridge $36.95 (64 voice)
EASY CZ BOOK $19.95 (350 sounds)

Disk & Storage SALE
*3.5" & 5.25" (holds 70)

		WITH 10 DISKS	WITH 25 DISKS
DISK FILE 70	$9.95	$14.95	$19.95
DISK FILE 120	$14.95	18.95	24.95
FLIP N FILE 10	. . . . .	6.99	-----
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DISK FILES have special handles for carrying, solid white bottoms & smoked top, and special stackable feature, plus dividers & non-skid rubber feet. Disks are DS/DD, hubs & sleeves included. FILE 10 has easel work station.

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GFL FOOTBALL (ST) $31.95
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN (ST) $36.95
FUJI 3.5" SS/DD (10), 2+ boxes $13.95 ea.
GFA BASIC $55.95 ORBITER $36.95 (ST)
NAVARONE CLOCK CARTRIDGE $39.95 (ST)
CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL $31.95 (ST)
CALL for hardware & software DISCOUNT on Group purchases.

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GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE WELCOMES G.R.A.S.S. - GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEM SUPPORTERS. With this issue, the Magazine grows to a circulation of over 700 and still growing. Although we may not be adding more clubs to the newsletter, both NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS and NEWS STAND / COMPUTER STORE SALES are continuing to increase our readership. Participate in the voice of MICHIGAN ATARI USERS - MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!

Presidential Address

by Ron Fargo

The fact that you are receiving this newsletter is proof that we haven't forgotten you. All present and past members of GRASS will receive just one issue. If you would like to have additional newsletters (one each month) you must pay your dues. George Nosky sent out dues notices early last month. All memberships are being put on an annual basis with current payment making you a member in good standing until 3/1/88.

Just to catch you up on the last several meetings: We have had very fine demonstrations on Atariwriter+, Syncalc, Synfile+ and a voice box. If all goes well we will have a demo of a bbs at the March 4th. meeting. The next meeting will be on April 1st.

We need a logo for our club. There will be a contest to pick a logo. The prize will be announced at the March meeting and the winner will be selected at the April meeting. Design a logo and submit it at the April meeting. Preference will be given to logos that are designed with computer devices such as Printshop, Koala pad, etc. We will have a large screen TV and computer and disk drive to display your electronic art work. Bring all disks and devices to show the art.

Wyoming Library
3350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

A COMPUTER CAN'T

Keep you warm on a cold winter night.

Lick a stamp.

Tell you if your tie is straight.

Walk the dog.

Share your stock losses.

Clean the barn.

Smile, and mean it.

Churn butter.

Kiss with any degree of sincerity

Make chicken soup for you when you feel poorly

Find a cop when you need one.

Change diapers on a wet baby.

Carry your golf clubs

Take your SAT's for you.

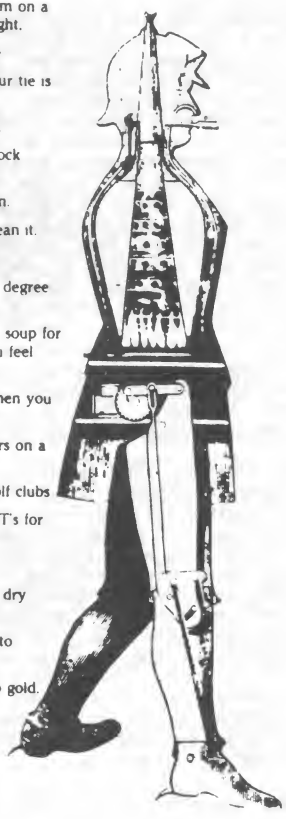
Fix a flat.

Make a really dry martini.

Grind meat into hamburger.

Turn lead into gold.

Lose weight.



FEATURE OF THE MONTH:
WORD PROCESSORS (8 AND 16 BIT)

HELP START Just Starting

WORD PROCESSORS & FOGGERS : 8-BIT ATARI
By: DOUG FELDMAN (W.A.U.G.)

The Feb. 1987 issue of Antic magazine has a useful article summarizing the primary features of 7 major wordprocessing programs for the 8-bit Atari computer. The W-P programs discussed include: AtariWriter Plus, First XLEnt, Paper Clip, Letter Perfect, Superscript (British Version), Word Magic, and Hometext. Each has one or more unique features that have made them popular with Atari owners.

I personally use the Atari Writer Plus package. It has 3 interacting modules that perform the text editing, spelling checker and mailing list functions. The text editor program supports on-screen print preview with a scrolling window feature. Several popular printers are supported by the standard printer driver handler. There is also a Basic utility to allow you to create a unique printer handler with your own choice of font styles (1-6). The spelling checker module uses a specially formatted disk with over 32,000 words. You may also load and save one or more personal dictionary files at any time. The major drawback to the XL version is the limited text buffer (12,300 bytes). The XE version is somewhat better (46,500 bytes). However the text buffer is divided into 3 separate banks. Overall, the editing commands are very powerful and easy to learn. This is a good program for beginner or intermediate level users.

In the same Feb. 1987 issue of Antic, there is an article describing 'The San Francisco Fogger' utility (ST and 8-bit versions). I find this concept to be very amusing and yet very interesting when executed. This Basic program reads your text file and calculates the Fog, Smog and Flesch readability indexes based on number of words per sentence, and the syllable count analysis. The Fog and Smog index estimates the years of schooling required to read the text. The Flesch index measures the 'reading ease' of the text file (ranging from 0 (hard) to 100 (easy). We hope to have this program included in the WAUG Disk Library at the March 10 meeting.

JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL

Review

THE WRITER'S TOOL
By: P. D. WALKOWSKI (W.A.U.G.)

THE WRITER'S TOOL by O.S.S. is a full featured word processor for the Atari 800 and XL computers with at least 48K and 1 disk drive. It comes on a cartridge and uses a copyable disk with printer drivers, a screen customizer and a spelling checker (dictionary). Various features such as disk I/O, printer formats, search and replace, and data base merge are menu driven so that no memory work is required. A reference card summarizes all the rest of the commands available with this product. In addition a well indexed 200 page manual is provided with enough detailed examples that even your pet rock could produce a major novel with comparative ease. The manual has a 100 page beginner's tutorial that starts with where to stick the disk and ends with creating and modifying the spelling checker dictionary and printer drivers. I can't say enough good things about the manual since it is absolutely the best set of software instructions I have ever used.

The program has two distinct modes of operation, "Typeover" and "Insert" (i.e. Control-T and Control-I; pretty clever, eh?). I usually blaze along in "Typeover" making up my thoughts as I go along. The editing commands are straightforward mnemonics as well: control+delete, control+U (Undelete), control+M (mark a block of text), control+C (copy a marked block), control+X (delete a marked block), etc. Several thoughtful touches such as one finger cursor control, upper/lower case conversion, macros for long phrases, and auto page numbering make the editing of a document a breeze.

The "Insert" mode is a study in transparent unambiguity. No cutting, spacing, typing and rejoining here! You simply plant the cursor and start typing. All following text moves over at each keystroke to let you see what you get.

Printer style controls allow use of nearly all of a printer's capabilities for over 20 standard printers. Thus you can insert emphasized, double-strike, double-wide, Italics, underlined, and sub/superscripted text

throughout your literary masterpiece. Font modifiers let you change among Pica, Elite, compressed, proportional, and spaced proportional type by using standardized commands in the text. The Writer's Tool converts this information, also mnemonic, as well as margins, indentation, and spacing commands into printer "control characters" to save the writer from the grief of ever having to imbed horrendous strings of gobbledygook within the text. (True die-hards can still imbed control characters to their heart's content).

Does the software have bugs? None particularly serious from my point of view. The DOS could use an "Undelete", but since the program is not DOS specific, going to Enhanced Density Atari DOS could resolve this. I've forgotten to turn my printer on and the program acts locked-up but "reset" puts things right again without losing any text. The major complaint I have is that the print-preview screen is only 40 columns wide (and does not scroll over to 80 or 120 columns). This is ok for locating page breaks but not at all satisfactory for hyphenating, right justifying, or typing tables. (I have since learned that a SPREADSHEET is better for tables anyway, since it allows you to sort and resort columns without ever giving a thought to format). Another nice feature (not found here) would be a cursor column number window, since setting tabs is the only exact way to line things up past the 40th column. I can also see no easy way to use The Writer's Tool to write involved scientific equations (i.e. using integral signs, summation symbols, and Greek characters). A dot matrix printer may allow alternate character sets, but it won't be easy. Presently it takes a bit of planning to get dollars and cents to line up out past column 40.

I've written OSS letters and called them with problems and have always gotten timely solutions, not the excuses I've come to expect with software houses. I even received the spelling checker upgrade (unsolicited) a year after I owned the software. Presently I am on a waiting list for a printer driver to use 100% of my printer's capabilities; that spells great product support. So why doesn't everyone own a Writer's Tool? Price is an obstacle to many since it discounts over $50. It is also not the simple tool for friendly letters, but rather a workhorse for long documents with headers, footers, alternating margins (for binding), proportional spacing, double column printing, lots of format changes. Advertising is also a factor. I haven't seen an ad for The Writer's Tool in 2 years and ANTIC didn't include it in their list of eligible word processors (see ANTIC 2/87).

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JIL FEATURE OF THE MONTH JIL

Review

TEXTPRO WORDPROCESSOR (8-bit)
PUBLIC DOMAIN - Developed by
Mike Collins and Ronnie Riche

Reviewed by Clinton Pierce (G.A.G.)

"Review Textpro?" Sure, I had used the program before, but I didn't have the docs and really didn't know all of the features. So, I went and bought a copy from the GAG library. HOLY COW! This has got more bells and whistles than 1030 Express!!

First of all, I am using Textpro 1.2a (with extention 2.5e) on an Atari 130 with a ramdisk setup. The program's built-in printer control codes do not work well with my Star SG-10 (but these can be changed, so easily!). The particular disk I have has all of the author's help files (accessed by hitting OPTION or HELP and the appropriate key for the menu you want to see).

In addition to all of the normal word processor features (Find, Replace, Insert, I/O operations, Move, Paste and about 40 more), it suports user defined fonts (which can be created with Create-a-Font, a public domain font maker available from most club libraries), an unusually large buffer (about 126 sectors, larger than Atariwriter or Home Writer), and macros.

Until I read the Textpro docs, I thought a macro was a fish of the family Scombridae. In laymans terms: a macro allows several operations to be done at once using a single keystroke. So far, I've only used the macros on the disk, however, there are serious possibilities in this. My fvorite, (in writing this review) is Swap1, it allows me to work on two different documents using my ramdisk as a buffer for the second document and just by pressing the START button, being able to work on two things at once. Or, if you're like me, and can't remember how to write a modified block letter, all you have to do is create a macro that sets up the form and fill in the blanks.

Not only did the authors read the Wordstar manual and include every possible feature, they also must have spent a few hours with De Re Atari and Atari Technical Notes. I have not been able to hang the program nor have I been able to do anything to snag it that couldn't be

fixed with a System Reset. The program is fast, its I/O operations are quicker than other commercial programs and more foolproof to boot. (Ani plans fore a spwlling chekre in the futuer?)

Complaints Dept: Actually, I have no major complaints. The search and replace could be a bit faster (to change "and" to "sand" in a 126 sector document takes 92 seconds). This is actually the second review I wrote for Textpro. The first one got wiped out at 1 am when I loaded a file right over top of it. In my drowsyness I thought it would merely append it to the bottom. This is where a message like "Erase File in Memory (y/n)" would be really helpful...

In conclusion, I would just like to say that Textpro is MUST for anybody who does serious word processing. It is public domain, meaning that you can download it from you local BBS or buy it from your Atari User Group. In my opinion, this program could blow out most other commercial programs and would make an excellent addition to any library (Be sure to get the accompanying Doc files too).

(PUBLISHER'S NOTE: The TEXTPRO revolution in word processing is just beginning. Already another new version (2.5r) has been released that allows use with a RS-232 handler in place. Now that might not seem like much, but the doc for the new version suggests putting it on the same disk as EXPRESS 850... call EXPRESS "AUTORUN.SYS" and TEXTPRO "DUP.SYS", and any reset from EXPRESS will take you into TEXTPRO... while a simple command from TEXTPRO would return you to EXPRESS... all in RAMDISKS if you like for INSTANT SWAPPING. YIKES!

And if that weren't enough, the new version has a VERY CLEVER and EASY system to divide and re-merge files that are too large to work on in one piece, a problem that the size of the work space in any word processor often causes. You simply place the cursor where you want to cut off the partially loaded oversize file, and press a button. The "upper" part of the file dissapears into a new file (in a RAMDISK if you like) and the file continues to load into the newly opened area of work space. When you get to where you want to be, edit as you like, and another keypress reassembles the entire file. YIKETY YIKE!!

This file divide MACRO will soon be available as an EXTENSION file for use with version 1.2a (which still has it's own virtues that were left out for compatibility reasons in version 2.5r). I also wrote my own MACRO that will take any format file I find (ST, ASCII, ANYTHING!) and in seconds remove, replace, redo, reformat it into 1) the proper style for pinting in this magazine (paragraph notation and all), 2) another version with modifications for display on the BBS, and 3) yet another for uploading to COMPUSERVE. All while I just watch.

More EXTENSION files are also planned for other special purposes. Additionally, the authors of TEXTPRO are planning an 80 COLUMN version that should work with the MIO (from ICD CORP), the ACE-80 CARTRIDGE (from AMIABLE COMPUTING), and the ATARI 80 column box (assuming it is ever released). With this modification, TEXTPRO will fullfill ALL of my own desires in a word processing package, since the current versions do not have a "preview" mode. Even so, I use Textpro EXCLUSIVELY now for work in both my profession and for this Magazine.

I DO have two complaints about TEXTPRO. First, sector counts are not displayed in the disk directories, in order to display more of them at once. I don't know about anyone else, but the size of a file is IMPORTANT to me. Second, if you put TWO SPACES after a period (a standard format for publications), and the wordwrap during the printing causes the second to wrap to the next line, it is NOT SUPPRESSED (the first IS, as they BOTH should be). You will notice occasionally that there is a leading space in a line within a paragraph in this magazine... it's the mark of TEXTPRO. I hope that these items are soon addressed by the authors of this fine package.

That aside, the only DIFFICULT thing about TEXTPRO is understanding how such a GREAT PROGRAM can be PUBLIC DOMAIN! -- John Nagy)

FEATURE OF THE MONTH

ST Review

FIRST WORD PLUS FOR THE ATARI ST
Reviewed by: Pattie Snyder-Rayl (W.A.U.G.)

Anyone who enjoys word processing with First Word will be more than pleased with First Word Plus from GST. Though the copy I have is only a pre-release version, it is impressive. The same features found in First Word are still here with a number of enhancements. Since all ST owners are probably familiar with First Word, I'll only describe some of the new features -- which may be incomplete since the user manual was not available at the time I got a copy of the program.

One of the more useful additions is a large on-line dictionary containing everything from "acrimoniousness" to "zygotes." Changing mispellings within your documents is as easy as

a click of the mouse. When a misspelling is found, the dictionary gives a number of possible correct words. Simply click on the correct word and the REPLACE option box to insert the proper word. The minimum system requirements for using the dictionary is a 520ST with TOS in ROM.

Another nice enhancement is the "Graphics" option, which allows you to insert NeoChrome picture files and international/mathematical characters anywhere into your copy.

A number of additional features which were not implemented in the pre-release version are footnotes, help on hyphenation during reformatting, multi-column printing and a mail facility. Without these options, First Word Plus is still a definite improvement over First Word -- with these other features, owning this word processor would be a definite Plus.

FEATURE OF THE MONTH

ST Review

PUBLISHING FOR THE MASSES
by Gil Merciez

Every once in a while, a piece of software arrives on the scene that is so enjoyablPUBLISHING FOR THE MASSES by Gil Merciez

Every once in a while, a piece of software arrives on the scene that is so enjoyable and powerful that minor flaws are almost ignored. Publishing Partner ($149 retail) from SoftLogik is just such a package. A full fledged desktop publishing program that ST owners have been craving has finally arrived.

Desktop publishing is a term that's been bandied about over the past couple of years since the arrival of Aldus Corporation's Pagemaker for the MacIntosh. In its simplest terms a desktop publishing program in conjunction with a laser printer let's you create a document, whether it be a simple flyer or even a magazine, in a way that was previously restricted to professional typesetters. While the output quality of today's common laser printers is high in relation to a standard dot matrix, their 300 dots per inch resolution still does not match the 1200-2000 dots per inches achieved by professional typesetting equipment. However, the quality is sufficient for all but the most demanding of business and professional applications.

Using the complete GEM interface, PP is a joy to use with most functions intuitively obvious. You can be up and running in under an hour with only occasional forays into the thoughtfully prepared reference manual. In addition to the reference section the 160 page manual includes a table of contents, index, 10 minute guided tour, and a more extensive tutorial in conjunction with a sample file on the disk. As your experience grows, direct keyboard equivalents are available for most menu selections.

Publishing Partner includes both a medium resolution color and a monochrome version. Screen resolution does not affect the print output but after using both versions, I would highly recommend the use of a monochrome monitor especially when using fonts that are 10 points and smaller.

Undoubtedly, PP will get its heaviest use in the realm of newsletters, and for this purpose it is perfectly suited. In addition to a large assortment of built in drawing tools which include circles, ovals, boxes, polygons, freehand, etc., (Line style can be customized, a wide choice of thicknesses is available along with 40 fill patterns), you can also import pictures or clip art in Degas, Neo, or Tiny format. Ascii text files can be imported directly into columns with the option of routing the text to a different column, or a different page. Anything that you place on a page can be cut, reduced, enlarged, deleted, moved, or cropped. Multiple pages can be created and held in memory dependent on available RAM.

Page size is variable from a 1 inch square to a mammoth 18 by 18 inch spread. PP defaults to a standard 8 1/2 by 11 inch page. Pages can be viewed, created, or edited in actual size, full page, 200%, 50%, full width, or any percentage between 15 and 999. Only in the multiple page viewing mode can you not create or edit your document. Columns can be created automatically or manually, A ruler option provides the ability for precise placement of graphic or text objects. Both left and right master page formats can be entered which will carry through the entire document. Pages can be numbered automatically and can be started at other than page one.

Text can be entered directly into your document and PP's wide variety of text editing tools are at your disposal including search and replace functions which, at your option, can be case sensitive. Font sizes can range from 2 to 216 points. Three screen fonts are provided with more to be available later. Each font can have any combination of 14 different styles including upside down and mirror (backwards), Fonts and styles can be changed from letter to letter if you wish.

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Text formatting commands include Centering, block right, block left, and full justification. Superscript and subscripting is supported. As both screen and print fonts are fully proportional, PP includes a provision for setting the character spacing of your choice as well as a manual kerning option which lets you adjust the space manually between two letters. Line spacing is, of course, fully adjustable. A buffer is provided for copying and moving, text, graphic objects, or pictures.

While Publishing Partner supports Postscript compatible laser printers, most of us can only dream about owning such an expensive toy that starts at a minimum of $2,000(for a real cheapie). Publishing Partner supports dot matrix printers. The first release contains drivers for the Epson FX80, MX80, and compatibles which include Star, Panasonic, Mannesmann Tally, and even two drivers for the Gemini 10X. More drivers will added according to SoftLogik. Output to dot matrix is impressive using the quadruple density graphics mode, although a bit slow at about 8 minutes a page. Speed will vary depending on printer. Don't feel bad, however. Depending on the graphic content of the page, a laser printer could easily take this long or longer as it has to compose over a megabyte in memory before it even begins to think about printing it. The six or 8 copies a minute that are advertised for laser printers are only for the actual printing once the page has been composed.

Due to the enormous amount of bytes that Publishing Partner has to process to print a page, it will pause during the print cycle as does Printshop. You can eliminate this pause by installing a minimum 32K print spooler. Apparently larger spoolers don't appreciably speed up the time the program is tied up in the print cycle.

PP originally intended to use Atari's GDOS for dot matrix printing, however, due to the late arrival and questionable quality of version 1.1 of GDOS, SoftLogik developed their own printing routines almost at the last minute. (All of the manual's printing instructions refer to GDOS. A four page insert tells you to ignore GDOS instructions.) As a result only one printing font, Helvitica, is supplied on the disk. Softlogik is currently working on additional fonts which should be available soon along with a font editor.

As with most young programs, particularly one as sophisticated as Publishing Partner, a few bugs have appeared in Version 1.0. The nastiest appears at times when changing font sizes on a column that is routed to another column. The program can lock up tight. A few other problems sometimes arise during the printing process. It is best to save your work regularly to avoid losing hours of work. A few other problems can arise during printing when PP cannot find the printer font on the last disk accessed. To work around this problem, make sure you have the font files on the same disk as your source file.

SoftLogik is aware of the initial bugs and has promised a free update to all registered owners which should be available by the time you read this. SoftLogik appears to be truly concerned about user support and welcome user comments as they plan to further enhance this already powerful program. This concern is further evidenced by providing Publishing Partner on unprotected disks. Their first order of business should be in fixing the few nasties, providing additional fonts, and supplying additional printer drivers, all of which they have promised.

As I mentioned in my local column, I recently read a review of five desktop publishing programs for the IBM in PC Magazine. Prices for these programs, most of which require a hard drive, range from $149 to $895 with some of the more expensive programs not containing all of the features of Publishing Partner. In fact some could not even import bit mapped graphics. It appears that PP can stand well with any of them. On the Mac and IBM minimum desktop publishing systems start at $10,000. With the announcement of Atari's laser printer in conjunction with Publishing Partner, the price will drop to around $3,000 which will put desktop publishing within reach of many more people and small businesses.

This short overview can only touch upon some of its features. PP has a good shot at becoming the premier productivity tool for your ST and you'll enjoy every minute of it.

AVOIDING THE MAIL ORDER BLUES
By: LEO SELL (C.H.A.O.S.)

Every now and again the subject of mail-ordering comes up as a hot topic of discussion. Maybe it's because of the Christmas orders people put in, or maybe the discussion just recycles. Whatever the reason, it is a topic that needs to be addressed.

First, let me make it perfectly clear that the intent of this article is not to encourage you to mail-order your equipment and software. In fact, if it is at all possible, I strongly

encourage you to shop locally. Support local dealers and advertisers. But, the fact is many computer owners find mail-ordering a necessary evil for a variety of reasons.

We've all heard, or experienced problems and frustrations when we mail order merchandise. So how can you minimize the problems? There are a couple of basic rules to keep in mind.

RULE #1
Never, never, never send cash or its equivalent when you mail order anything. This includes currency, checks or money orders. Why???? Cash gives you NO protection if you have a problem or disagreement. The merchant, since he has your cash, holds all of the cards. He can take as long as he likes to fill the order, or send you old stock, or whatever. When that happens, you will have no recourse but to take up the problem with the merchant alone, and you are still at his mercy.

RULE #2
When you order, use a Bank Card such as Visa or MasterCard. Even though you may have to pay a premium of 3 or 4 percent, the protection you get with a Bank Card is well worth it. Buying C.O.D. can also help, but only as far as getting the merchandise in a reasonable amount of time. Any problems you have after taking delivery still must be taken up with the merchant and the merchant alone.

PROTECTION
So what is the protection that using a Bank Card will afford you? Well, just as I was writing this article the February issue of Consumer Reports arrived with an article called "The Hidden Power of Plastic". So, what follows is a homogenization of my own experience working for a major Bank Card company, and pointers from Consumer Reports.

The protection you have by using a Bank Card is called a chargeback. Chargebacks came about as part of the Fair Credit Billing Act. Basically they are a way to charge a purchase back to a merchant. There are several reasons to request a chargeback:

Billing before shipping
Backordered merchandise
Quality of goods (returned of course)
And so on...

For the most part, when a problem occurs, you have plenty of time to request a chargeback. But to be safe you should make the request within 60 days after the charge appeared on your bill. Here are the steps to take:

1. Contact the merchant and try to get satisfaction. According to Consumer Reports formal documentation is not necessary. A phone call will do, as long as you have the name of the person you talked to.

Tell, or write, exactly what your grievance is, and exactly what you want done to correct it. Also state the time limit you are giving them, after which you will take other action.

2. Write the Customer Service Department of your Bank Card Company. DO NOT enclose your letter with your payment. Look for the address given on your statement to "Send Inquiry To".

Your letter should include your name, address and account number, the essential facts of the dispute (including your merchant contact from step 1), and the amount of the charge or the amount that you are withholding from your payment if you usually pay in full. Consumer Reports then says, tell them explicitly that you request a chargeback under the special rules of the Fair Credit Billing Act. If possible, attach a photocopy of the statement showing the charge.

Don't pay for a problem purchase. If you already did so, and your balance is zero, then the company should deduct the amount on your next statement.

Once the Customer Service Department has your letter, they will take steps to charge the amount back to the merchant. The chargeback procedures will involve your Bank Card company and the merchant's. If the chargeback is accepted by all parties the amount will be taken off of your bill.

If the merchant challenges it then your Bank Card company will have to take a second look. Usually they will support you, their customer and do what you, their customer, wants done.

FURTHER ADVICE
In a mail order dispute, if the charge is put through before the merchandise arrives, or if it doesn't arrive in the expected time, request a chargeback.

If goods don't show up within 30 days after an order, request a chargeback.

If you have requested a chargeback on undelivered goods, refuse delivery if they eventually arrive.

If it appears that fraud, or near fraud is taking place, contact the Fraud Department of your Bank Card Company, as well as the Postal Inspector, Better Business Bureau, and Attorney General of the state in which the merchant is doing business.

All in all, be assertive when you order merchandise. Insist on knowing if the merchandise is in stock or not, when it will be shipped. And don't allow billing before shipment. Protect yourself, no one else will.

ST Report

ST NOTES
By: LEROY VALLEY (T.A.G.)

Anybody out there looking for hard drive goodies? You know, things like an EXTREMELY fast backup utility to handle all of those MEG's that you've got lying around, or how about autobooting from your hard drive without a floppy? Yes, if you act now folks you too can have all of these goodies and more! (If you didn't guess, I'm going to talk mainly about hard drives this month.)

But seriously , you don't need to buy a hard drive backup program. There's a hard drive backup program called Turtle (currently available on Genie, Compuserve, or at our club library) that really is nothing short of amazing. It creates a ram disk which duplicates a single or double sided disk exactly. Once the ram disk is full, it does a track by track copy to the floppy in your disk drive. This eliminates the physical head movement required for writing each file, and the time savings are substantial. As a comparison, a friend of mine who uses Michtron's Backup utility, backed up a 6 Meg partition that was full. It took 1 hour, 12 minutes, and 8 disks. Using Turtle it took 11 minutes, and 8 disks! And Turtle is not a bare bones PD program. It provides you with all sorts of information, like the current folder being backed up, the number of bytes in the folder, the number of bytes remaining in the folder to be backed up, the number of folders that have been opened up, the current floppy number, and each file is listed as it is backed up. The only bug that I have found is that Turtle does not back up a file with 0 bytes, such as some of the printer files in Print Master.

Notice that I said the number of OPENED folders, not the number of folders backed up. This is due to the infamous GEM 40 folder bug. That is, if you open more than 40 folders in a session, you could experience a computer lock up. Using Turtle, the number of folders opened will be twice as much as the actual number on the hard drive. This is due to the fact that you are recreating each folder on the ram disk. I did not experience any problems until I hit 93 open folders on one of my partitions. At this point, my computer displayed those cute little bombs and turned into a deaf mute. After shuffling the folders on my hard drive and reducing the actual number to 39, I backed up the drive without any problems.

Now, on to the juicy stuff -- autobooting your hard drive! You can find a file in the General/Disk Utility data library on Genie right now (it's also in our club library!) called HDINSTALL.ARC. This program is designed to install a program on your SH-204 Atari hard drive that will allow it to autoboot when you fire up your trusty old ST. DON'T DESPAIR if you're the proud owner of a Supra hard drive - the program will also work on your drive! However, as they say, there is no free lunch. This program requires you to reformat your hard drive and to leave 0.3 MB unused. That's right 0.3 MB!

I was just about to install it on my Supra (I knew that Marc had it running fine on his), and decided that I would call Supra to verify that the drivers for the SH-204 and the Supra were indeed compatible. Supra assured me that I should have no problem, but when the technician learned that the autoboot program I was going to use required the loss of 0.3 MB, he told me to wait for the Supra Auto Boot program. Supra has their own program running in the lab, and it only requires 2 sectors on the hard drive! It should be available in the Atari Developers section on Compuserve by the time that you read this. Along with the autoboot feature, the program will allow you to install as many as 12 partitions! Boy, am I glad that I bought the Supra! (The program will be copyrighted, so it will not be in our club library -- sorry.)

I'm going to mention one more item before I call it quits. I just received a new book in the mail from Abacus called "ST BASIC TO C". This book is designed for people who already know basic and would like to learn C. The book offers clear cut examples in both ST Basic and C, and the author does an excellent job of explaining how to implement basic functions in C. The first chapter is a whirlwind tour of C, and covers all of the basics you need to get started programming in C - for and while loops, printf and scanf statements, variables, constants, arrays, if and if-else loops, etc. This chapter gets you going right NOW. Later chapters cover each of these topics in greater detail. The author does a very good job of presenting the material, and he writes in everyday language. If you want to learn C fast, this book is a must!

Telecom

Is Packet Switching Networks in Danger?
by Jerry Cross (GAG)

Over the next few month you will be hearing a lot of things about increased Compuserve charges, the elimination of PC Pursuit, and many other types of information network systems.

So far, the only information that has been printed are vague comments from Philip Walker of Telenet. Trying to get information about anything to do with Computer Enquirery III is pretty tough. My calls to the FCC only brought such comments as "HUH?" and "Try calling this guy".

Anyway, here is what I have found. Be advised that I am an employee of Michigan Bell and may be a bit biased, however I am also a heavy user of information networks like Compuserve, Genie, etc, and have an interest in their views also.

First, what's all the fighting about? Last year, the Bell Operating Companies (BOC's) filed a request with the U.S. Federal Court to change some of the restrictions imposed by the 1984 Modified Final Judgement (MFJ). The MFJ is a guideline that spells out what the BOC's are allowed to do after the break-up of AT&T took effect.

Part of the MFJ restricted the BOC's from getting involved in packet-switching and information services.

Packet switching systems are services you use to access online databases and commercial online services, such as CompuServe and The Source, with just a local telephone call. Once you call the local Telenet or Tymnet number, for example, and a connection is made, you are then connected with a computer that puts you in communication with the online services with which you wish to communicate.

Currently, the FCC regulations allow AT&T (and NOT the BOC's) to engage in Packet-switching network operations. The BOC's must offer free local-calling access to their lines to any companies engaged in the packet switching services.

These regulations have allowed Telenet and Tymnet, among other companies, to operate at a reasonable cost in a competitive atmosphere. AS things stand now, you can call any local Telenet or Tymnet access number and use these services to inexpensively access such services as CompuServe, The Source, Delphi, and countless others. In addition, GTE's new PC PURSUIT service now offers you the access, through their Telenet Packet switching service, to literally hundreds of local bulletin boards in cities all across the country--for the flat charge of $25 per month.

According to Tymnet officials, eliminating the FCC requirements that stipulation that the BOC's offer these companies free access to their local telephone connection lines, and also by allowing the BOC's to begin offering these services themselves, would cause the access charges to their users to double, or even triple.

And now the other side of the coin. In a newsletter dated January 19, Ameritech Chairman Bill Weiss stated their intention to fight the MFJ rules, and request permission to provide information and inter-exchange services.

Lifting the inter-exchange service ban would give major business customers more options and also benefit small customers, allowing BOC's to handle high-end customer needs.

Also, lifting the information services ban would make information services widely available to ordinary citizens, boost the small business sector where most new jobs are being created and unleash countless new entrepreneurs to enter that market.

Foreign telephone companies--especially in France, Japan, and Britain--are already offering a host of 21st century electronic information services that are not yet offered here. The reason is that they permit their phone companies to compete in these markets, and we don't.

Removal of the information services restrictions would not put the Bell companies at an unfair advantage, because FCC regulations would assure competitors of equality of access to the local network.

The real problem, in my opinion, is that the existing companies are very worried about the BOC's taking away most of their large-usage customers, and stand to loose large amounts of their business. The bulk of their business comes from the business sector, not from the individual home-computer user, much the same way the phone company works. By charging larger access charges during the day to large companies, they can easily subsidize the home users, thus keeping the cost down. But if they loose their business customers they must raise money from other means (like us PC PURSUIT and CompuServe users).

What people keep forgetting is that the BOC's will be offering these same services. They are much better prepared, both financially and in technology to do so. If the BOC's can offer these services (and more) to their customers, they should be given the chance.

All the BOC's want is the opportunity to offer this services (creating competition in the packet-switching market), but in order to do this, the "core" of the MFJ will have to be gutted. In the long run, the winners will be the business customers, while the losers are the personal computer users who are dependant on PC PURSUIT and others to access long-distance systems.

It would be nice to have a crystal ball and see what the future plans of the BOC's are, but for now we are very dependant on the current

companies offering these services. It is very important that you make your views clear to the FCC and the Federal Court, and be sure they are looking after your interest.

On February 2, the Department of Justice recommended that the federal court overseeing the Bell System breakup lift the information services and manufacturing restrictions imposed by the MFJ. Judge Greene set initial hearings on the recommendations for March and April. He is expected to seek comments from a variety of industry players in his deliberations--including regional companies, manufacturers, and long distance and information services providers. Industry watchers predict it will be late summer or early fall before Judge greene concludes his deliberations, so there is still time for you to be heard!

Send your comments to: Honorable Mark Fowler, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Washington D.C., 20554.

ST Technical Review

AERCO 1 MEG RAM UPGRADE FOR THE ST
Reviewed by: CRAIG HARVEY (W.A.U.G.)

The ad for this product (in Antic) caught my eye over any of the others because it was the first one I'd seen that claimed not only no soldering, but also easy upgrade to 2.5 or 4 megs (using 16 or 32 1 meg RAM chips). After checking my December issue of Byte magazine and finding that 1 meg chips had come down from around $90 in September to about $40, I concluded that someday I might actually be able to afford to get into the multi-megabyte league. So I ordered the version with the 1 meg sockets already installed ($209). The ad also mentioned the need for a larger power supply when going above 1 meg of total RAM, but when I called up AERCO I was told that it looks like the 1 meg chips draw less power than expected, so the larger power supply would not be needed.

It took over a month to receive the upgrade AFTER my check had cleared. Even with the holiday rush, this still seems long. When it arrived I read through the very complete and well illustrated directions, and took apart my ST for my first time. Tools required for the upgrade are: a small Phillips screwdriver; a needle-nose pliers; 2 jewelers screwdrivers (or other small tipped prying tool); a flashlight (only if you like to see); and patience!!!

Taking it slowly and gawking at the innards of the ST, I still was done in about 45 minutes. The instructions said something about an included disk that would tell the computer to use all the RAM. This disk was not included, but a phone call determined that the disk had only been needed on earlier versions of the upgrade. I confirmed this by successfully setting up a 720K ramdisk.

A couple days later I came home to find my BBS (and the computer) crashed. I couldn't even get a disk to boot. After taking apart the ST and attempting to find/fix the problem, I concluded at least one problem was a bad solder joint in the upgrade board (and I was unsuccessful at fixing it myself). So after another call to AERCO the upgrade went back to its maker.

A few weeks later, I received a call from Aerco saying the revised version would be arriving in a couple days. The revised design would take care of the different thermal expansion rates in the original design which caused it to fail.

The new version did arrive, and looked better constructed than the original, BUT out of the 68 pins that were supposed to be there, only 65 existed. Another call to Aerco and another week's wait got me a proper sample of the revised version with all 68 pins. It looked good and was simple to install (no soldering). It has now been working wonderfully for a couple weeks, 24 hrs/day, allowing me to maintain a 640K ramdisk for my BBS. I can also fit my Modula-2 editor, compiler, linker, and library files into it for much faster and more pleasant programming during those few hours per week when I take down the BBS to satisfy the programming urge.

Atari Eight Technical

UPGRADES ARE FOR EVERYBODY
by Gary Ferris with John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)

A great deal of attention has been focused recently on the large number of ATARI computer memory upgrades. This article is not intended to deal with the technical aspects of the various upgrades, but will try to point out the reasons why you should consider any particular memory upgrade.

If you are seriously considering a memory upgrade, by all means do it SOON. The price for memory chips is about $35 to 60$ per 256K already, and is expected to as much as TRIPLE in the next few months due to import trade regulations.

ATTENTION

800XL OWNERS:

RAMASTER

AS REVIEWED BY C.H.A.O.S

256k UPGRADE

130XE COMPATIBLE

$30.00

(ADD $2.75 FOR S&H AND C.O.D. CHARGES)

INCLUDES EVERYTHING

BUT RAM CHIPS-$4ea

313-261-7609

The most common usage of extended memory is as a simulated disk drive, commonly called a ramdisk. The advantage of this usage is its incredible speed. Its main disadvantage is that the contents are lost when the machine is turned off unless first transfered to a real disk drive. Many additonal uses (such as the fabulous BASIC XE from OSS, Inc.) are continuing to surface as extended memory becomes commonplace.

THE "OLD 800" UPGRADES

Long before the XL series of computers hit the scene, there were several options available to ATARI 800 owners for additional memory. AXLON was one of several, and many early applications programs (like SYNFILE and SYNCALC) were written to use the extended memory available from this system. The modification was very easy (replaceing one of the plug-in memory boards) but usually cost several hundred dollars for each increment in memory size. Some of these original boards (or new designs based on them) are still available today, and the price still tends to be much higher per K than any of the other system upgrades.

However, thanks to the inventive spirit of ATARI owners, David Byrd created the plans for the "800 PLUS 288K UPGRADE", with a parts cost of around $30. The REAL cost for this upgrade is in man-hours assembling it. It should NOT be attempted by beginners in electronic work, although the plans (complete with PICTURE FILES for help) are specific enough to guide any reasonably experienced solder jockey. The mod has two stages- if yo do only the first part, yo can fully use the extended RAM in about 2 1/2 hours of careful work. To complete the mod and get "full" AXLON compatibility takes another hour or so.

Note: This mod IS NOT memory compatible with the XE computers. You will NOT be able to use software designed for the XE and XL upgrades nor BASIC XE, but instead must use AXLON type ramdisk drivers and software. This is a serious drawback to this mod, but the RAMDISK capability is still worth the effort.

THE 400 UPGRADE

Although 48K upgrade kits for the 16K 400 computer have long been available, the supply (and demand) has just about disappeared. The effort and expense of this upgrade is typically not worthwhile considering the limitations of the 400 keyboard and the price of NEW XL and XE machines.

THE 800XL UPGRADES

One of the first upgrades for the XL was invented by Claus Bucholz and published in BYTE MAGAZINE. His original design was not compatible with the 130XE, but since it predated the XE there was no standard to follow. Claus soon modified it to be XE compatible and placed the plans and scource code for his RAMDISK drivers in the public domain. That effort started the real avalanch of upgrades.

At first a circuit board with the neccesary support chips had to be hard wired. The circuitry on the board depends on which ANTIC chip your XL has. Fortunately for the sanity of the technical members of user groups who were being asked to do upgrades, several plug in boards became available. (I would personally pay for a board out of my own pocket before I could EVER be persuaded to hardwire one again!!).

If you are fortunate, all the chips will be in sockets. If so, then changing the required chips will be a snap. If not, then exercise great care in desoldering the chips and CAREFULLY inspect the double sided board for damaged paths. Repair any damage and install sockets. This will make it far easier to change any chips which may go bad in the future.

THE RAMASTER

The Ramaster is the exact Bucholz circuit on an excellently designed plug in board. This is the one I have used on the XL's I have upgraded. The quality of the board is good and it has the additional circuitry on board which is required for the old ANTIC chips. You merely place a jumper for the particular chip you have. This board is available for about $30 w/o memory or $50 (chip market pending) with memory. These boards may not be available for too much longer. For more info contact ABC Consulting (313) 261-7609.

THE RAMBO XL

No, this is not a tough guy computer that goes out and blows up Commodores at night. It is an upgrade board by ICD, makers of SpartaDos and many fine pieces of hardware for the 8-bit ATARIs. I have no personal experience with the Rambo XL, but based on my experience with other ICD products as well as reports from other users, it is a good quality product. It is an XE compatible upgrade with the added benefit of being able to be used on a 1200XL! The installation is reasonably straightforward, with some significant addition of jumpers if used with a 1200XL. Base price (retail) is $39.95. For more info, contact ICD Inc. (815) 968-2228 or your local ATARI dealer.

THE RAMCHARGER

This memory upgrade is a relative newcomer. It requires no modification to the computer itself and has the advantage of being able to work

with the original 800s since it is plugged into the cartridge slot. It does cost substantially more than the other upgrades though. The 256k cartridge is $150. They have a 512k version for $200 and 1 meg version for $300. Included with the cartridge is MyDos and it is compatible with the Axlon upgrade to give you 288k in SynCalc and SynFile+. For more info, contact Magna Systems (718) 939-0084 or your local ATARI dealer.

THE NEWELL UPGRADE

The upgrade board by Newell Industries is not fully compatible with any of the above upgrades but is more nearly compatible to the actual 130XE in that it retains the ANTIC enhanced mode. (The 130XE allows you to use the extra memory for the CPU or as video ram (ANTIC).) Since there is very little software which uses the ANTIC mode this is not an important consideration. For more info, contact Newell Industries (214) 442-6612 or your local ATARI dealer.

THE 600XL UPGRADE

After having done several 800XL upgrades, someone asked about upgrading the 16k 600XL to 64k. I thought, 'At last! A use for all those 4164's.' No such luck, where the 800XL's use 8 64k by 1 bit chips, the 600XL uses 2 64k by 4 bit chips. This means that pile of old chips you've been saving is useless and also that the 256k upgrades for the 800XL will not work on the 600 XLs. I don't know if there are 256k by 4 bit chips available or not. If not, then 64k is the practical limit for a 600XL. It is an easy upgrade though requiring only the new memory chips and 3 jumpers. Most clubs have these plans available, or buy a kit from COMPUTER SERVICE LAND for about $25. (703) 237-2950.

THE 320K 130XE

First, I'd like to thank Scott Peterson for sharing the upgrade instructions with ATARI users. It's a very clean modification since most of the circuitry for bank selection is already built in the XE.

To do the 320K upgrade is very simple if you have any experience at all with soldering. I do make one exception to his instructions though. He recommends against solderwick and I swear by it (I HATE SOLDERSUCKERS!!!!) His reasoning is that you may damage the circuit paths. If you use the commonly recommended 25 watt iron you will find he's correct. This is not hot enough to desolder components (33 watt is ideal) I also HIGHLY recommend installing sockets in the spaces where you removed IC's (8 16 pin and 1 40 pin socket) They are not absolutely necessary but this is the ideal opportunity. If you ever have a chip go bad in the future it will be a lot easier to replace this way.

The entire 320k can be done in less than an hour (most of this time being in removing the old chips) Only one chip is required in addirion to the 256k memory chips which are substituted for the second 64k bank.

THE 576K 130XE

The 576K upgrade is quite a bit more involved than the 320K. I don't recommend this for the novice. You have to undo some of the 320 upgrade, add 2 additional support chips, and piggyback 8 more 256K chips on the 8 previously installed. This involves a large number of jumper wires also. The additional time to do this mod was about 2 hours (so a total of about 3 hours to do the 576k at one sitting).

You also lose your internal BASIC ROM in the 576k mode. A switch is added which returns your internal BASIC but only gives you use of 192k. To use BASIC in the 576K mode requires a cartridge such as BASIC XE.

THE 1088K 130XE

This is the largest upgrade documented to date. It is reputed that someone actually built one, although even I wasn't that crazy. In all honesty, the only reason I could see for doing it would be oneupmanship (Ask all your IBM friends how they can live with only 640k), although it may be useful on a BBS. I built the 576k mod and have never come close to using it all in normal use. (I have filled it to see how many files it would hold). Another potential problem is that if you use items such as the XM301 and PR Connection which take their power from the computer, they may not work properly do to inadequate power supply capacity.

In my opinion, the best DOS available, especially for upgraded machines, is SpartaDos by ICD. Their RD.COM file will automatically format the RAMDISK for whatever configuration you have (up to 576K) with the command RD Dn:. To reserve the extra 64K for Basic XE the command is RD Dn: /E (space between : / IS REQUIRED). You can also enable the Ramdisk without formatting by RD Dn: /N. This would make it possible to copy a program and it's required data files to the ramdisk as D2:(or whatever), and then turn off the real disk drive and rename the ramdisk as D1:

Information on most of these upgrades as well as MANY different RAMDISK handlers can be obtained by calling the CHAOS BBS at (517) 371-1106 in Lansing MI (home of Claus Buchholz!) Upgrade text files and programs are a primary focus of the CHAOS BBS, and are online at all times.

Review

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE
Reviewed by Kurt Hozak (CHAOS)

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE
Parker Brothers
190 Bridge St.
Salem, MA 01970
48K disk for $40

(ED. NOTE: In the last two issues we brought you some capsule reviews of older software still good and getting cheaper for the 8-bit ATARI. Here is another, with more detail!)

You are Panama Joe, a dare-devil treasure hunter. Knowing there is treasure and excitement to be found, you enter the Aztec emperor's fortress, hoping to get to the treasure room.

So sets the stage for MONTAZUMA'S REVENGE, A puzzle/arcade game for 8-bit Ataris. You must jump and grab the jewels and objects hanging from the ceilings of over 100 different rooms. There are 9 difficulty levels provided so that things do not get boring. To get to the treasure room, you can take take different routes, and you often have to after each level, because the fortress changes after each level. Structures you can use as methods of travel include normal and disappearing floors, conveyor belts, ladders, chains, and poles. Crevices can be jumped, but if you miss or fall short, you lose one of your initial six Panama Joes, which get replentished at various point intervals. Other ways you can lose a life are running or falling into a fire pit, laser gate, spider, skull, or snake. Spiders can crawl up and down ladders, while skulls either roll or bounce back and forth between the walls. Snakes stay in one spot.

There are also doors, which play a major part in the game. There are three types, each either red, white, or blue. In order to open the door, you have to have a key of that color, which you can find in one of the corridors. You can only carry five keys or other objects at a time, but jewels are not counted. When you have to find the right key for the only exit and you have a skull and a spider coming after you, it can get very fun and very hectic very quickly. The other objects other than the keys and jewels are: amulets, which temporarily make all the creatures powerless; swords, which let you kill one of the creatures; and torches, which let you see in the deeper chambers, which are normally completely dark. Unlike a lot of other games of this type, you can back-track from room to to room, and you will often have to.

The graphics and sound effects are very good, both being very realistic. There is a lot of detail, such as the fire swaying back and forth, and Joe going up in a puff of smoke when he falls into the flames. His antics from when he runs, jumps, and climbs are also good. Each screen is uniquely different, providing a challenge every step of the way to the treasure room. However the most important question still needs to be answered. Is the game fun? A definate, unqualified YES! It is the BEST game I have seen of this type, it's graphics putting all of the rest of this genere to shame. It is an exciting game that I can heartily recommend to anyone.

Telecom

HEALTH CARE INFORMATION A LA ATARI
By: Judy Barnes

Aside from the BBSs out there that Atari users have been accessing, there is a world of informational databases available. Information on any subject is available literally at your fingertips through the right database.

Those of you Atari users who are health care professionals may already be familiar with a database from the National Library of Medicine called MEDLARS. Some of you may be accessing the database through BRS or DIALOG vendors.

As you know, the most popular file on MEDLARS is MEDLINE. MEDLINE incorporates the coverage of Index to Dental Literature, International Nursing Index as well as that of Index Medicus. These three primary health care informational resources together index nearly 4,000 American and international magazines in the health sciences.

The National Library of Medicine began last year sponsoring end-user training programs through local health care facilities. Librarians at universities and hospitals have undergone training to teach end-users the six hour "Basics of searching MEDLINE" course. The successful completion of this course entitles participants to file for a password that will enable them to access MEDLARS directly.

The primary advantages to having one's own password to MEDLARS directly are being able to access additional databases not on BRS and DIALOG like PDQ, the cancer protocol database, and the lower cost for searching all of the databases.

MEDLARS is less expensive when accessed directly. After all, they own the rights so there are no royalty fees passed on to you and per citation charges are also lower.

Understandably, there are some differences in the search terminology used by the three vendors. MEDLARS also offers a program to run on IBM and compatibles which is menu driven and develops a search strategy for you based on how you answer questions asked by the software. MEDLARS does respond to user needs and if encouraged, may respond by offering "Gratefulmed" written for Atari and others.

If you do not already have a password to MEDLARS/MEDLINE and your field is health care, you may want to contact the librarian at your place of work or a health care institution near you for information on how you can be trained to search this valuable database system.

Atari Technical

ATARI 1050 DISK DRIVE REPAIR
Defective Head Park Switches
By D. R. HAULSEE

One possible failure of an ATARI 1050 disk drive that will cause endless boot errors is a failure of the sensor that detects if the read head is parked. This sensor is currently NOT AVAILABLE as a repacement part, but MUST be in working order for the drive to operate. This article will help you to replace it with more commonly available parts.

TOOLS NEEDED

#2 Phillips head screwdriver
#1 Phillips Head screwdriver
30 watt maximum soldering iron
Small flat blade screwdriver
Small needle nose pliers
Epoxy or equivalent glue
Xacto Knife

COVER REMOVAL

Turn the 1050 on its back and remove the 6 phillips head screws. Carefully turn the drive back onto its feet and set it down. Gently lift the back of the cover and slide it forward. The front bezel will come off with it.

DIAGNOSIS

The head assembly slides on tracks and is driven by a stepper motor located to the right of the disk platter. The head assembly has an arm that sticks out to the left. This arm slides into a u shaped sensor when the head is retracted.

Connect power to the drive but do not attach it to the computer. Turn the drive on (do not put a disk in the drive). As the drive powers up it must find the location of the read head. If the head is parked, it will index the head forward until it clears the sensor and then repark it. If the head was not parked, it will retract the head until it is parked.

If the sensor is bad, the head will index forward 1/4 of inch and stop. Every time the drive is turned on the head will index forward. Eventually the head runs out of travel and will bang repeatedly on the forward stop. When connected to a computer, you get a boot error because the drive cannot find the boot sectors.

As a final test, disconnect the J10 connector on the circuit board. Do not pull on the wires!!!!! Use the needle nose pliars. It is the next to last connector on the back left of the circuit board. When the connector is removed, 4 pins will be exposed on the circuit board. Jump the front two pins on the board together and turn on the drive. If everything else is alright the head will begin to retract.

As soon as the head begins moving, turn the drive off and remove the jumper. If the head did not move backwards then the problem is in the circuit board or the stepper motor. That is beyond the scope of this article.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SENSOR

The sensor is composed of an infrared LED and an infrared photo transistor. Either one of the pair could be bad. I have not found direct replacements for them, but, a pair made by Radio Shack will work. The LED is part number 276-143A and the receptor is part number 276-145. Please note, these parts are larger than the original parts and will not fit into the existing sensor housing. You will have to fabricate a housing for them.

PROCEDURE

1. Remove the sensor from the drive. The wire tie to the frame must be cut.

2. Cut the sensor from the wires. Orient the plug as it goes in the drive. Place shrink tubing over the wires and then solder the parts to the wires as follows. The order is from front to back.

1st wire-emitter of part 276-145
2nd wire-collector of 276-145
3rd wire-cathode of 276-143A
4th wire-other lead of 276-143A

After soldering, position the shrink tubing over exposed connections and heat it.

3. Plug the J10 connector back into the circuit board.

4. Fabricate a mounting that positions the LED vertically looking down. The mounting must have fore and aft adjustment and position the LED above the arm on the head unit. The arm on the head unit must pass under the LED. Ideally,the photo transistor pair should face each other. Unfortunately, there is not enough room under the arm for thr receptor. By trial and error I discovered that the receptor can be placed on its side. The LED though must shine directly into the receptor.

5. Fabricate a mounting that positions the receptor horizontally looking toward the head mechanism. The mounting must have fore and aft adjustment and allow the arm on the head unit to pass over it. I cut the original housing into pieces and glued the LED and receptor to halves of the mounting. I then used standoffs to set the parts to the correct height.

6. Turn the drive on. As the drive powers up it will position the head over the sensor pair. If the head will not position, check to make sure that the wires are properly connected.

7. Now that the head is being parked, make sure that it is parked in the proper place. As a starting position the back end of the head mechanism should be 3/8 of an inch from the inside boss that holds the arms that the head slides on. If the location is wrong, turn the drive off and move the sensor pair as required. When the drive is turned back on it will repark the head. Continue moving the sensor pair until you get the 3/8 dimension. The sensor pair is only moved with the drive powered off.

8. Connect the drive to the computer and attempt to boot a disk. SPARTADOS is less sensitive to head location than DOS 2.5. If the disk boots, run some programs to check that the drive can read all disk sectors. If the drive can not read all sectors or will not boot then move the sensor pair a little forward or backwards. My two drives both held a dimension of 7/32 of inch on the gap referenced above.

9. Be patient. Eventually you will get the correct gap. Reassemble the drive cover and you are finished.

Atari Technical

by/compiled by John Nagy

Lots of people have been having all kinds of strange problems since adding the ATARI XM301 modem to their system. Disk drives time out, printers won't print, some drives destroy directories, some software won't work. The worst thing is that it isn't CONSISTANT, so it's hard to trace... but it is LIKELY to be that MODEM. The problem seems to be that it takes too much power off the serial line, and that kills various things at various times. A fix is proposed by the STATUS group of Virginia Beach: Get three 470 ohm resistors, as small as possible. Open the XM301, and locate the wires coming in from the cable that are labled "3", "9", and "13" on the circuit board. Some modems will have some sealant covering the wires, be careful. Remove each wire (one at a time, if possible to avoid mixing them) and solder the resistor between the wire and the board. Carefully tape or shrink-tube the resistor-to-wire connection, and re-assemble the modem. That's all! Now the XM301 will use less power and still operate fine.

While you are inside that XM301, you might also want to graft another cable onto the one in it... It's worth sacrificing a normal I/O cable to get out of the "will I use the PRINTER or will I use the MODEM" dillemma faced by many with a one-plug printer interface. Just remove one end ot the I/O cable and attach it inside the modem to the existing cable. Be careful to match EVERY WIRE in the modem with the one you are attaching, and be sure you attach the additional cable on the CABLE end of the resistors you added in the above mdd, not on the MODEM end. Don't mix connections, or you may hurt something.

While we are on MODEMS, the POWER SUPPLY on the 1030 ATARI modem seems to both be rather prone to failure and impossible to replace. It is a 9 volt A.C. supply, rather rare in the RADIO SHACK type supply house. So, get a "universal" type 9 volt D.C. supply, open it up (even if you have to get crude with the case) and simply solder a wire across the diodes, or remove the diodes altogether. Be careful if it has 4 diodes, then you had better remove them and reconnect the output wire from your dead supply right to the transformer in the new supply. Check the voltage before you try to use it, the modem will not complain as long as it gets 7-12 volts.

BACK TO THE XE and XL KEYBOARDS: Still having problems after doing some keyboard repairs? Maybe the little springs in the ribbon connector have given up. This happens after several removals and re-insertions of the keyboard ribbon. Check the ribbon itself to see if it has had any of the connections scratched through- if so, carefully trim 1/8 inch off to allow contact on fresh connections. Also, make the ribbon THICKER for better contact with bent springs by adding one or several thicknesses of ordinary stick-on paper lables. It WORKS.

Last Hacks

BBS Commandments
By Richard A. Hughes
LinkUp Magazine

1. Thou shalt love thy BBS with all thy heart and all thy bytes.
2. Thou shalt love thy fellow hacker as thyself.
3. Thou shalt remember thy name and password.
4. Thou shalt not POST IN ALL CAPS!
5. Thou shalt only use one alias.
6. Thou shalt only call a BBS two times a day (at most).
7. Honor thy Sysop and thy Co-Sysop.
8. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's password, nor his or her real name, computer, software, nor any other thing belonging to him or her.
9. Thou shalt not post messages that are stupid, worthless, or have no meaning whatsoever.
10. Thou shalt use the English language properly.
11. Thou shalt spell thy words correctly.
12. Thou shalt delete thine own mail.
13. Thou shalt delete thine olden messages.
14. Thu shalt help other users.
15. Thou shalt not post anonymously when offering criticism.
16. Thou shalt keep thy foul language to thyself.
17. Thou shalt only occupy the BBS with thine arguments, for verily, I say unto thee that thou shalt maketh a fool of thyself.
18. Woe be unto the user who attempts to crash thy BBS, for he or she shalt be cast out from the sanctuary of thy hobby and must repent by doing 40 days and 40 nights of penance of voice-only communications.
19. Thou shalt first dial BBS numbers during the day by way of voice line to assure correct numbers.
20. Thou shalt not post other users' real names.
21. Thou shalt not post messages while drunk.
22. Thou shalt confine thy messages to those of friendship, requests for assistance, aid to the needy, advice, and advancement of thy hobby; and thou art obligated to repel any who wouldst trangress upon those commandments.
23. If thou doth promise to reply to a message and thou doth not, then surely thou shalt spill coffee into thy keyboard and burn out thy central processing chip.
24. Thou shalt not giveth any false information when applying for membership to the BBS, for verily it is writtn that whosoever shall do so will surely be found out and thy welcome on all boards will be thus denied forever and ever.
25. Thou shalt log on properely and in accordance with thy Sysop's rules.
26. Thou shalt observe BBS time limits.
27. Thou shalt not upload "worm" programs.
28. Thou shalt not ask stupid questions that are already fully explained in thy BBS instructions.
29. Thou shalt not compromise the security of the United States of America through thy postings and hackings.
30. Thou shalt not violate applicable state/federal/local laws and regulatons affecting BBS telecommunications, or thy will face the wrath of thy judicial system.

BBS Bill of Rights

1. Users shall have the right to free speech.
2. Users shall have the right to privacy.
3. Users shall have the right to appeal before being booted from the system.
4. Users shall have the right to be stupid a maximum of three times.
5. Users shall have the right shut up.
6. Sysops shall have the right to do whatever the hell they want unless it violates the above statutes.

Sysop Commandments

1. Thy sysop shalt jerk out like weeds from his Userlog all twits who obey not his will nor obey thy commandments.
2. Thy sysop shalt clear his files of all users who have not called in four months.
3. Thy sysop shalt not treat new users with disdain, or as slimy creatures that crawl upon the earth, for even sysops once upon a time did not know their bits from their bytes.
4. Thy sysop shalt not add useless laws and commandments to complicate the lives of his users.
5. Thy sysop shalt not create needless electronic bureaucracies.

"...That's a great idea. Starnes but in 10 seconds it's going to be obsolete..."

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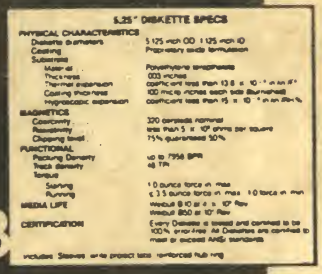

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P. O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

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MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

NOW INCORPORATING THE NEWSLETTERS OF THESE ATARI CLUBS:
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING) -- G.A.G. (FLINT)
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G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) -- G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

MORE on the 8-bit ATARI Emulator for the ST- Inside this issue of M.A.M... It looks like arangements are being made that will let author DAREK MIHOCKA release his public domain "ST TRANSFORMER" WITHOUT having to use ATARI ROMs... since it seems ATARI isn't interested in arranging anything. The "finished product could be released as early as sometime in MAY.

BATTERIES INCLUDED, Canadian makers of lots of great 8-bit and ST ATARI titles (and noted for a recent stance of NO COPY PROTECTION) has just been bought by ELECTRONIC ARTS. EA has developed the opposite reputation (HEAVY COPYPROTECTION, ANTI-ATARI, etc.). It looks like EA will continue to support many existing BI products, but is likely to drop those under development. Particularly likely to be dropped is PAPERCLIP ELITE, since it would be a direct competitor with EA's MS WRITE. 8-bit support, look out!

MAXIT, a computer show sponsored by the MICHIGAN COMPUTER CONSORTIUM (Lansing area computer clubs), will be held SUNDAY, APRIL 26, At the Clarion Conference Center in Lansing. Billed as the biggest show ever, admission is $2.50, with focus being local dealers and seminars.

GAMES COMPUTERS PLAY plays no more. Just after an expanded text-only service went into effect to supplement the innovative graphic-oriented telecommunications service, GCP abruptly closed up on February 28. Details are not plentiful, but money problems are the cause. They DON't expect to reopen as of this writing.

GEnie, a rapidly growing telecommunication service similar to but priced below COMPUSERVE and THE SCOURCE, has a special deal for ATARI owners (since ATARI maintains a direct access on GEnie, with frequent online conferences with well-placed officials). Register before the end of the year and save the $18 regstration fee. Call 1-800-638-9636 for the details.

WOULD YOU BELEIVE A 1200 BAUD ATARI MODEM... The company that seems to have changed their motto to "PRODUCTS without the PRODUCTION" now promises that the modem they announced over a year ago will be tested by the FCC and released "soon". The modem "will" support the 8-bit direct connection as well as the ST (standard) RS-232 cable. An 8-bit handler (totally new and not compatible with ANYTHING) handler and a special version of KEITH LEDBETTER's EXPRESS! terminal program will be SOLD SEPARATELY! YIKE!

M.A.C.E., a Detroit area ATARI CLUB that once boasted 1200 members before hard times and internal political disaster peeled them to today's 400 count, announced that GUESTS at their meetings will no longer be allowed unless they PAY a $2 fee (per family), for wich they also will get a copy of the M.A.C.E. newsletter and membership literature. BE ADVISED, fellow ATARIANS, you are not as welcome as you might guess at SOME other club meetings!

ATARI CORP OF SCANDANAVIA?? Yes, ATARI opened a "daughter" corporation in Sweden sometime in January, 1987... Work is reported progressing there with a dealer network, but further details of what ATARI needed a full fledged CORPORATION for are fuzzy. They have been selling machines overseas at a 2-to-1 ratio faster than stateside... maybe they plan to move?

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8-bit Software

Sargon III	:	$ 19.95	Kennedy Approach	:	$ 19.95
Hitchhiker's Guide	:	$ 14.95	Spies Demise	:	$ 19.95
Goonies	:	$ 14.95	Dimension X	:	$ 19.95
Karateka	:	$ 24.95	F-15 Strike Eagle	:	$ 19.95
Basic XE	:	$ 69.95	Mad Spy vs. Spy	:	$ 19.95

ST Software

Thunder	:	$ 34.95	Arena	:	$ 39.95
Hex	:	$ 19.95	Alternate Reality	:	$ 39.95
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* This is a package item call for details on the package.

M.A.M. this Month

Editor: Rich Barnes (517) 349-0513

Inside MAM: THE CLUBS-

	PAGE
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	9
G.A.G. (FLINT)	11
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	13
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	15
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	18
C.A.C.E. (JACKSON)	21
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	24

FEATURES:

8-BIT/ST EMULATOR - More info from DAREK MIHOCKA	25
ALLENTOWN ATARIFEST REPORT by Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)	27
ATARIFEST SCHEDULE (ATARI)	30
MIDIMAZE! Review by Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)	30
SYNCALC APPEAL from Tom Siemietkowski (B.C.A.U.G.)	32
MIDITALK with Mitch Wells (C.H.A.O.S.)	33
M.U.L.E. REVISITED by David W. Altoft (G.K.A.U.G.)	34
QMI BB/ST Reviewed by Bill Rayl (W.A.U.G.)	35
ABACUS ST FORTH/MT reviewed by Peter K. Enberg (C.H.A.O.S.)	37
LAST HACKS... from INFOWORLD, indirectly....	38

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE is an independent newsletter published by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and is not affiliated in any way with Atari Corporation. Atari, the Fuji symbol and the names of various Atari computer equipment are trademarks of Atari Corporation.

This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

At the Crossroads... M.A.M. and the Future

From the Publisher,
John Nagy (517) 487-5646

Times change, expectations change, birth, death, infinity... And so it is with this publication. MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE has grown into a 40-page compendium of club news, industry news, tips, reviews, and computer humour.

It has not been without costs. And those costs MAY cause SOME of our current member clubs to reconsider their involvement in MAM.

As originally conceived (and promoted- mostly by me), MAM would cost each club 50 cents per issue mailed to their members. Since it was costing most clubs near that figure to produce a small local newsletter, it was an attractive offer. Mind you, 50 cents per issue would only pay for a 16 page newsletter- the remainder of the production costs would be made up by advertising revenues, with the magazine size variable according to the number of ads sold. Each club was heavily encouraged to participate in production of feature articles. In addition, they were also heavily encouraged to participate in AD SALES, in order for the magazine to have room for everything we would like to include. It was made clear that such sales were necessary in order to make the magazine worthwhile.

This worked with very mixed results. High quality feature material has been regularly contributed by a number of clubs. But 50% of all the ads have been generated by efforts of the central MAM group, not by the 8 clubs involved. Several times we have had only enough revenues to produce 28 or even as few as 24 pages, only enough room to give the most basic information by each club, with no feature articles. An issue like that was NEVER the intention for what MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE.

Rather than print such an issue, the Lansing club (C.H.A.O.S.) has several times "bailed us out" with the needed funds to add another sheet (4 pages) to the magazine. As the "publishing club" of the magazine and having the largest single membership in the group, they were willing to do this PROVIDED it would not continue. It amounts to a direct subsidy to the clubs that are not participating in the ad sales effort.

It actually costs about $1.10 per copy to generate and deliver 700-800 of a 40 page magazine like this one. (Postage alone would be 58 cents an issue if we didn't have the advantage of BULK MAIL rates!!) Any club that paid their 50 cents and didn't help in ads was

making some OTHER club (or the magazine itself) make up the difference.

Many ideas were kicked around to re-work the financial picture to afford a larger and more stable magazine. I consulted repeatedly with the heads of each of the clubs, looking for some reason to hope that the ad sales effort would pick up steam... with not a lot of success. Finally, it was suggested that each club should pay for what it gets, one way or another. If it doesn't contribute to the sales effort, it should not ride on the efforts of other clubs.

What we ended up with is this proposal: the BASE PRICE per issue to clubs will be 80 cents. Clubs will be credited 30% of the income resulting from any ad handled by that club. (AT LAST! INCENTIVE!)

These figures were arrived at by calculating the costs against the actual average ad sales performance compared to the number of members in the typical club. At these figures, the magazine can be at LEAST 28 pages if NO ads were sold (an UNLIKELY event!). With only a single ad sold (national, at full page rate), the cost per issue for a 50 member club would again net to about 50 cents per issue, plus allow additional pages in the magazine. Further sales can actually reduce the costs to a club BELOW the former levels. Battle Creek, for example, could pay a NET COST per issue of only 12 cents (!!!) if they were to sell a SINGLE page of advertising! (Several clubs will ALREADY be AT or BELOW 50 cents with their current ads!)

It cannot be stressed enough that this IS NOT A PRICE INCREASE. This is a costs re-allocation. Due to our higher volume, the magazine costs NO MORE to produce per page than ever, even with the new covers and two color art. I simply am no longer willing to spend all my own time selling ads (in order to subsidize clubs that have not been contributing) and then produce the magazine as well. Believe me, I lose my own personal money in this magazine every month (phone calls!!) as well as spending too many hours to count. This work MUST be distributed AS ORIGINALLY INTENDED or I cannot continue at all. The new "rates" allow the clubs to regulate their costs by expending effort, or to pay for the luxury of mere consumption. If the member clubs can't find anyone interested in working for the good of their clubs, the clubs will simply have to pay for what they get... or not get it. Just like they would with a local newsletter. The difference is that THIS effort produces a statewide, 40 page magazine that has few rivals ANYWHERE for content or style.

This has been an upsetting experience to me. I have had long discussions with multiple club officers (on MY phone bill) about options and needs, and the officers have universally agreeing both in theory and principle to the need and fairness of a rate structure change. Now, some of those same officers are reacting in public shock and even outrage now that the rate has become a reality. Hey, I'm only trying to keep the magazine paid for.

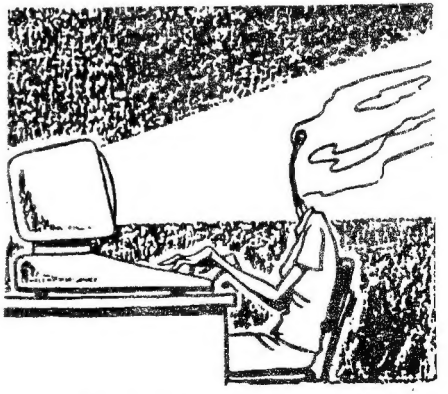
Is this the last rate change? I don't even want to continue making this magazine if costs can't be contained within this proposed budget. I will NOT recommend any further price increase. I would instead support dissolution of the magazine, as it can only fail if the clubs fail to support it.

With this formula, It is possible that we could even expand to as many as 48 pages while bringing the cost per issue BELOW the 50 cent mark for ALL the clubs, IF the clubs actively participate. And sales, particularly NATIONAL ones, are actually pretty easy due to our size and quality of production!

It will be up to each club to decide if they will continue in MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. You have seen the product. We can be whatever you want us to be, but not without your support. Will there be enough interest- either in FUNDS, EFFORT, or both- to keep it working? Please discuss this matter with your club officers and make your thoughts- and willingness to help- known.

DO-IT-YOURSELF HUMOR DEPARTMENT

What's your pick for the best caption for this cartoon? There are a couple ideas to get you started... Send us your best shot through your local editor, and we will print the best next month! Let's get crazy...



1) New Copy Protection scheme cuts piracy off at the scorce...
2) New F-16 Simulation features added realism in "crash sequence"...
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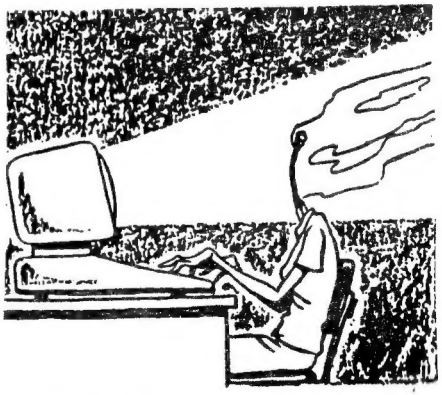

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CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud. (ATASCII/ASCII)

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.
S.T.I.N.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.
The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:
East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Marvin Goldstein	332-5471
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

There is a little bit of this and a little bit of that to tell you about this month. First of all, we have another Computer Show coming up. The Michigan Computer Consortium is sponsoring MaxIt on April 26 at the Clarion. Unless something unforeseen occurs, C.H.A.O.S. will be there in its usual big way. But, of course, we need help. Please pitch in with equipment and time. Call me and volunteer today!!!

Speaking of volunteering, this is a new C.H.A.O.S. year. There have been some changes and additions to the jobs that need done. That means we need more volunteers. We are in dire need of someone to help us out with newsletter advertising. Newsletter costs have increased, but we can lower them by handling some of the advertising duties ourselves. This is an opportunity for someone to really help out with an important job.

There are other opportunities to get involved as well. We must increase the pool of people involved. The same people have been involved in one job or another for two or three years and

they're getting burned out. If you want C.H.A.O.S. to continue you have to get involved.

At the March General meeting we took time to recognize some people who have made extraordinary efforts over the past few months. I would like to add a word of thanks to ALL of our volunteers. Thank you ever so much. Without your efforts, C.H.A.O.S. would not exist.

On other fronts, CES is coming up at the end of May. Should be fantastic. Hopefully Atari will be still closer to actually marketing its new machines. And who knows what new announcements they may make. If you would like to go as part of the C.H.A.O.S. delegation, let me know.

One last thing. I've cleaned out my closets and started thinking about reconfiguring my system. No I'm not buying an ST, or anything that spectacular. But I do have a few items for sale including: 130XE (320K) $125, an orginal 800 (48K) $50, a complete ATR8000 (replaces the 850 interface, plus acts as a printer buffer, and gives you CP/M capabilities) setup, including a DSDD drive, power supply and case, for $300, and a few items for hackers that I'll take almost any offer for, including a TTL monitor, an ITT MSDOS computer (junked out), and IBM 64 watt power supply, a full height dual disk case, and so on. Give me a call and make me an offer (517-349-0404).

Til next month, happy Atari Computing...

Seretary Treasurer's Report
By: Gary Ferris

March was election month at CHAOS and some new faces are on the 1987 edition of the board of directors. The new board members are:

John Baker - Vice President. John replaces John Nagy who stepped down to devote more time to the Michigan Atari Magazine.

Marvin Goldstein - 8-Bit Rep. Marvin fills the position vacated by Adam Slonim when he moved away.

John Johnson - 16-Bit Rep. John is officailly elected to the post he was appointed to this winter.

Congratulations to these three new members. The current board is now:

Leo Sell	-	President
John Baker	-	Vice President
Gary Ferris	-	Sec/Treas
Marvin Goldstein	-	8-Bit Rep.
John Johnson	-	16-Bit Rep.

Lots of excitement was generated by the newly introduced 40 page library catalog plus all disks are now double sided except for Disks of the Month and Antic/Analog disks.

Several members were awarded certificates in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the club. There are many others who certainly were deserving of praise also.

John Baker demod a good DOM which was heavily graphics oriented this month.

Jim Baker and Dennis Kazee combined for a fine demo of Atari Planetarium, the highlight being the view of the little known 'Sneaker Constellation'.

The treasury took a beating this month with the cost of printing the library catalogs but still retains a good balance of $846.87.

Gary R. Ferris

ST

ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions. In March, a snowSTorm came again the night before the ST meeting. Over 20 people ignored the snow and attended. Equipment was also adequate, with 2 systems and 4 disk drives. Running ST output through the overhead video system is now routine, although a conversion box is on order to do this without using a VCR, and to improve the video quality.

John Johnson was elected ST sig representative to CHAOS, which is the only elected position that the sig has. The sig does have a new librarian, Scott Evans, and Chet Kapusinski has begun the new ST sig publications library. For better or worse, I remain the ST sig program coordinator. An ST membership coordinator, which would include coordinating membership, money, and records with the CHAOS treasurer, is still a position waiting for a volunteer. We also need someone to help out with the library during meetings, i.e. format and create extra library disks.

Any publications that can be donated to the ST library will be welcomed. After all, a book or magazine does much better being read than taking

up space on your bookshelf. Publications can be checked out one meeting and returned at the next. Peter Miller demonstrated and described ZOOMRACKS II (to be reviewed in a later issue). ZOOMRACKS II is a unique data base/file manager program. In general, Peter is satisfied with his purchase, and intends to use this product. Apparently several small businesses do all their bookkeeping on ZOOMRACKS II. Peter especially liked that it had a menu, for when you don't know the commands, but also keystroke commands, for when you are experienced. Further description will wait for a full review in a future issue.

Among other software, MONOPOLY from the CHAOS ST library was demonstrated. The new CHAOS SOFTWARE LIBRARY DISK CATALOG already needs an addendum sheet for ST software, since the number of public domain ST programs is growing so quickly. Besides MONOPOLY, a C compiler and a spreadsheet have been added to the library. After the formal meeting was over, nobody left, they just formed small groups and talked. One item mentioned was that an IBM formatted 3 1/2 double sided diskette will read and write properly on an ST. No code file can run, of course, but Ascii text files can be transferred OK. As soon as IBM users convert from their 5 1/4 drives to the new 3 1/2, they will become ST compatible!

In closing, a very simple ST tip. If you're using the mouse to select a group of file names to copy or delete, it's necessary to press the button above the 1st file, then drag below the last file, to select the group. Sometimes its difficult to control the mouse, moving it straight down to the target file. But if you move the mouse to the right before moving it down, you get a box shape that's easier to control.

Besides a great deal of library work, usual discussion of problems, vendors, and software comparisons took up much of the meeting. One unusual topic was electricity. One member swears by his surge protector: When an electrical problem occurred, he lost his refrigerator, TV's, and other appliances. But his surge protector blew and his computer survived. Another member said don't EVER unground your color monitor (don't use a 2 prong adapter for its 3 prong plug).

Mark Smathers also talked about the upgrade he got for his 520 ST. While he went to 1 Megabyte now, he also had sockets put in for adding the new 1 Megabit chips when they come down in price. This will allow him to go to 2 1/2 Megabytes eventually. According to Mark, this is the best that can be done without unsoldering the original chips on the motherboard. It would be possible to go to 4 Megabytes by doing extensive motherboard work.

John Johnson and Dave Spinnet concluded the meeting with a demo of Flight Simulator II for the ST (which was reviewed last month in this magazine).

As usual, I'll close with a little tip. Many programs, like First Word, show a window of file titles when you want to load from disk. For example, First Word might show A:*.DOC, and all the titles that have the extension DOC. If you want to look at another drive, like B:, you can click on the directory line, left arrow to the :, backspace, and change A to B. The result is B:*.DOC. If you click on the grey window bar, you'll get a directory of every file on B:, or B:*.*. If you click in the titles area, however, you'll get those files that match the specifier, in this case every file ending in DOC. You can, of course, change the directory line, like D:*.PIC.

STop in at the ST meeting.

By: John Baker, C.H.A.O.S. Librarian

Change. It's what keeps you young or makes you old, depending on your point of view. C.H.A.O.S. itself, the BBS, this magazine, the library---- all influenced by change. And all changed by the influence of interested members.

One change that should be obvious by now is the new library listing. Several things merit mentioning. First of all, the listing is huge! A whopping 40 pages! Even at that size though, it does not contain everything in the library. I had to chose a cutoff point at which I no longer added things to the listing. An update sheet is already in the works. In fact we just added an update sheet for the ST section.

Second, the 8-bit library is now double sided, but the price has remained the same. Let me see, If I get out my trusty XL and do some figuring---HMMMM (RUN "D:FIGURING")----- Hang on-----WOW! It tells me that I am getting twice as much for the same price! Who says computers aren't practical.

Third, the listing is in a new format. This should make for easier reading. Demos, Pic files, AMS are all listed with file name and sector count. Printshop graphic icons are all illustrated.

Fourth, the ST library is now included in the catalog and ST files are set up in category sections making a more unified library arrangement. Special thanks to John Johnson for

the hard work involved to make this change. Also because of tighter quality control, the active search and addition of new ST files, and to allow uniformity in the library, ST disk prices will go to $5.00 per disk.

"New ST files did I hear him say?" You bet! Doubling or tripling the size of the ST library is my first project. Be assured though, that quality and not quantity is my primary objective. Much good public domain software is available for the ST, and I'm going to make sure that our members have access to it.

Another benefit that I began last month is giving a free ST library disk to anyone applying for or renewing their ST membership.

Disk of the month feature disks have done very well for the 8-bit section. I am going to institute that same opportunity for our ST users. Don't spend all of your time and energy searching for new public domain ST files. Get them monthly on our ST Disk of the Month. Each new disk will be demoed and offered at the meeting.

So you can see that a C.H.A.O.S. membership is your ticket to more enjoyment out of your Atari, no matter which model you use. See you at the meeting!

P.S.: If you aren't a CHAOS member and want a copy of our great new 40 page SOFTWARE catalog, send $2.00 and your address to "CHAOS DISK CATALOG", Box 16132, Lansing, MI, 48901!

Telecom

The CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by JOHN NAGY

At last I can tell you that the CHAOS BBS is operating with a 10 meg hard drive! We have been working at it since December, but finally the replacement drive unit arrived this month, we plugged it into the MIO box, and ZAP! It is FAST!!! I do believe overall that our software is among the fastest BBS systems ANYWHERE.

We will be soon re-organizing the structure of the files section on the BBS to provide more information and more ease of selection. We plan to keep 400-500 files online at most times, with many "standard" selections (to include the "basics" of utilities, communications, and some top games and demos). Plus, there will be "current" selections whose stay on the list may be shorter lived. You will find a large selection of ST programs as well, a feature impossible to provide without LOTS of storage room.

ALSO: plan to use a new feature that will soon allow you to send a file to a specified individual by "attaching it" as a download to a private message... and the receiver can delete the file and message when he gets it!

Presently we are suffering with a MIO bug that was a new one to ICD Corp's TOM HARKER. I had to call him to say that the ASCII translation in the MIO device was INCOMPLETE. Inverse video characters are sent as such, rather than translated into the standard character like an 850 would. This causes all kinds of hassles for "IBM" type terminals using our system, and even blows the MI-TERM software for the ST into nonoland. Gary Ferris is working on a machine language filter now as an interim solution. Actually, this situation allows a very unusual opportunity... we could in fact set up ANSI COLOR GRAPHICS like the big guys do! The color information is sent as high-bit characters, usually unsendable in ASCII translation on an ATARI...

NAHHHHH.

We are adding MESSAGE BASE MANAGERS and BBS LIBRARY ASSISTANTS. Apply online if you would like to help. We will also start another round of CLUE! if we get enough applicants.

Till next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!!
(The CHAOS BBS, 517-487-5646)

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Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

NEXT MEETING
Vo-ed Center April 9, 7PM

Presidential Address

by Chuck Steele

Well, it is April and I hope everyone has got their Tax Forms in. Hope some of you have put your Atari's to work for you in doing your taxes. I have found doing my taxes on the computer to be so much easier and quicker.

At our first meeting at the Vo-ed center we were treated to seeing some of our favorite programs on a 40 inch projection TV. Thanks, Dan, for arranging this. I feel the new location has much to offer us as we expand. For those of you who weren't there, the room is between the front east and front west entrances across from the office. If you enter from the far west entrance, you make a left and down the hall, make a right and the room will be on your left. If you enter from the rear of the building, make a right and go all the way down the hall, and the room is on the far left corner. Hope nobody got lost and couldn't find us.

I would like you to check your mailing labels to see your expiration date. We will stop sending you this newsletter if you aren't paid up. You may mail your dues to Josephine.

Todd had a nice demo of Hard Ball. The graphics are really neat. You get camera views like watching a game on TV. For instance you get a view from center field while you are pitching. Split screens and music. Some of us felt it was more entertaining than MicroLeague Baseball!! And it was all the better on the large screen. Does anyone remember the stick figures on computer games back in the 70's??

Todd presented the BCAUG disk of the month. Featured was a great Chess game. Todd let the computer play itself on the easy level. The moves were fast and white was winning when we finally switched to another program. Dungeon was a game that takes one back to the days of yore but Todd needs help!! We had two nice Graphic Conversion programs. One was CONVERT.BAS and the other was RLE. CONVERT.BAS allows you to change a picture from one graphic standard to almost any other Atari graphic format. Real handy if you want to edit some picture files and you don't have the correct drawing program. RLE converts pictures to a Graphic Standard so you can send them via modem to another brand computer. And CHARSET is yet another Character Set Editor for those of you who want a different type face on your computer screen. Want an international type face such as Greek, Hebrew, Russian or Japanese? Have fun. If you haven't been coming to meetings you are missing out!!

And if that wasn't enough we had a slide show and a demo of the San Francisco Fogger. Thanks Todd and Dan, good job!!

This month I plan to show you my Atari movie, so bring your popcorn, sit back and enjoy.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

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Atari 130XE Computer	$149.00	Atari 1050 Disk Drive	$149.00
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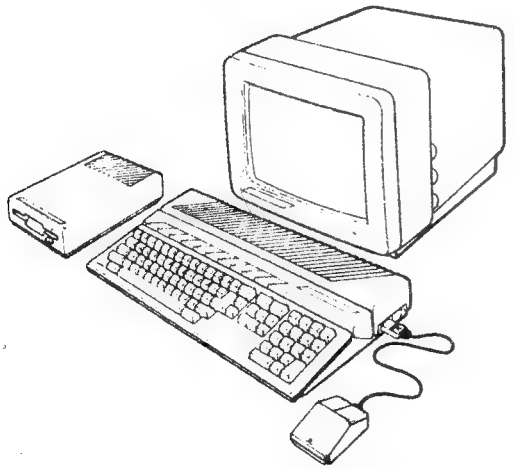

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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Viewpoint

Presidential Mumblings for April
by Jim Steele

....exerpts from a recent Byte House press conference .....

Well, the first topic at the March meeting was the upcomming "Atari Magic" show in Detroit. At this point in time, nothing is certain.(To the best of my memory) No doubt as the show dates approach, we'll have a better idea as to what's going on. Since GAG is a very informal group, we don't have the finances to bankroll the show to any extent. Nor do we have the "legal existance" to enter into contracts, for that matter. The general consensus among the March adderdees was that we'd supply volunteer gofers at the show in exchange for a club booth and some kind of cut from the gate. All of this is still tentative, and subject to negotiation. (See ya in Reykjavik!) Look for further news in the comming months.

The second issue raised was the "hands off management" style of the Wednesday meetings. Personally, I prefer the freewheeling bull session format though I suppose it does leave the newcommer out in the rose garden. At any rate, next time we will despense with the "flamming" about the latest rumors from the mill. Look for sub groups on the following topics "ST" "BASIC programming" "Graphics" and "adventure games" and whatever else we get requests for. If you feel like leading one of these SIGs, great!

See ya in April, Jim "tef"

Next Meetings:

April 8, 6:30pm
April 25, 10 am. National Computer Clinic
(note new time and place!)
May 13, 6:30 pm Neithercut
May 23, 10:00 am National Computer Clinic

Disk Library

Library Offerings For April
by Jerry Cross

This month, I will be starting a new policy. Well, sort of new. Gill has been doing it with the ST library for a couple of months now. But starting in April, if you purchase 10 club disks, the price will drop to $2 each. (A savings of $5!). With all the new disks added in the last year it's real hard to purchase them in bulk, so I hope this will help out.

The new catalog is finally finished, but the Xerox machine at work broke down in the middle of copying, so it will be a little while longer before they are mailed. There will be a few available at the meeting for you to pick up though.

Also, I just returned from the Allentown AtariFest, and have some freebies to give away, so plan to attend the next meeting.

Well, lets get started...

Disk #182 contains QUEST FOR POWER, another game much like the "Pyramid" game from last month. This is another graphic/adventure type game.

Disk #183 is a utility program that will take a graphic adventure game (like this month's QUEST FOR POWER) and modify the maze or characters. Full instructions are on the disk.

Disk #184 is an older disk I have had for several months, waiting to find a place in the library. ATARITOONS is a collection of "cartoons" that were created with a utility included on the disk. These cartoons are created with ATASCII graphic characters, much like the movies you may have seen on local bbs's.

Disk #185 is called "Eyes of the Illuminater in 3D". It's another adventure game from the Cleveland Atari club. I haven't quite figured out what catagory to put this in. It's part pinball, part graphic adventure game. That's what the author wanted though.

Disk 186 is another DigiVisions disk. It contains a lot of good Computereyes pictures, plus a slideshow player.

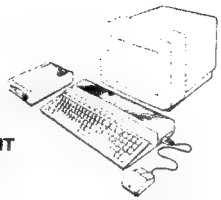
Disk #187 and 188 are more RLE pictures from Compuserve. More disks will be added in coming months.

Finally, Disk 189 contains lots of graphic and sound demo's, including several sound demo's from Germany.

That's it for this month. I'll see you at the meeting.

-Jerry

ST News



ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

The ST attendance at the meetings has been steadily growing over the past few months and with that growth, sales of the library disks have exploded. By the April meeting the library will be over 50 disks.

I will also have the newly completed disk catalog which, thanks to Publishing Partner, will be of a manageable size allowing me to make copies enough for everyone. Hopefully, I will soon be able to track down a laser printer to run off a master copy to improve the appearance even more. The next project will be to compile both an alphabetical listing of all the programs followed by a listing arranged by program categories. Good things take time, however, so be patient.

The Saturday morning workshop sessions have been moved to National Computer Clinic on Saginaw just north of Bristol in Burton. The starting time will be at 10 am and this informal session will last until 12:30 or 1pm. We'll try this out for a few months to see how it works out. We should have access to more ST's there. The Saturday sessions are held on the Fourth Saturday of every month.

Two new disks of Tiny Pics, Volumes 9 & 10 will be available in April. Both of these disks contain some stunning artwork as well as some breathtaking examples of digitized color pictures.

I have enough GFA Basic material for a second disk of programs and programming examples for those who interested in this blazingly fast language. One of the members had asked me to convert the ST Puzzler from the March Antic to GFA Basic. I finally got around to it and as expected, I now will have to go back and add some pause commands to slow the darn thing down. I may even get ambitious and add an option to import picture blocks rather than geometric shapes. On second thought, I'm probably not that ambitious.

There will also be at least one disk containing a variety of utilities and an arcade type game. Utilities include an animator program, a disk library program that allows you to add comments, and an aliasing program that allows you to rename multiple files at once. Also included is a splendid tutorial program on the GEM Desktop that guides you through all of the functions with hands on examples and explanations. It's perfect for the novice ST owner.

It has recently come to my attention that most ST owners also have rather larger stock portfolios to manage. With the time these people spend hunched over their ST, they tend to not devote as much time as they should tracking their 6 and 7 figure investments in the financial journals. Fear not, for in April there will be a Stock tracking program in the GAG library that will allow you to track those precious stocks keeping tabs on their daily performances, highs and lows and other interesting data.

There is a relatively new monthly magazine called ST X-Press which can be purchased with a program disk for a very reasonable $8.50. The publisher states that while the programs are copyrighted, feel free to distribute them through user groups and bulletin boards as long as credit is given to the magazine. Look for programs from ST X-Press to soon start appearing in the GAG library along with associated source code. Programs are generally written in C, OSS Personal Pascal, Assembly, or ST Basic. They have several good examples for Pascal programmers.

Also look for a combination Ramdisk and print spooler accesory that allows you select and deselect ramdisk and/or print spooler sizes as well as set your configuration on boot up. A special treat is a small program which will allow you to auto boot GEM programs. Up until now it was only possible to run a TOS based program (A program that doesn't use the GEM interface) from the Auto folder. This Gemstart program when put into an auto folder will now allow you to cold boot your favorite GEM application compliments of our ST friends in Germany.

I am also always searching for volunteers who would be willing to demo some of their newest software, hardware, etc. Even I sometimes tire of listening to myself. See you in April.

-Gil

Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari users in and around Flint, Michigan. Write to :
G.A.G. c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Membership dues are $10/year which entitles you to year's subscription to the GAG newsletter, now a part of the Michigan Atari Magazine. Membership also brings access to our Disk and print libraries. (If joining by mail, please make the check payable to the current president.)

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE WELCOMES G.R.A.S.S. - GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEM SUPPORTERS. With this issue, the Magazine grows to a circulation of over 700 and still growing. Although we may not be adding more clubs to the newsletter, both NATIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS and NEWS STAND / COMPUTER STORE SALES are continuing to increase our readership. Participate in the voice of MICHIGAN ATARI USERS! MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!

Meetings

Wyoming Library
3350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

Presidential Address

by Ron Largo

G.R.A.S.S. News

I know most of you are forced to order Atari equipment from the magazines. It would be a good idea to read the article in Analog before ordering things from Black Patch. Many club members have told me that they have good service from Electronic One, Columbus, Ohio.

WE WILL BE LOOKING AT LOGOS during our club at the April meeting. Bring your art work (electronic or otherwise) to the meeting. We will have the large screen set up to display your work so the club can pick a winner.

We are planning a contest for programmers. Submit your program to run on an eight bit Atari at the May meeting. The program can be anything you would like and in either basic or machine language. Programs that use printers and other devises will be considered on an equal basis with straight computer programs. There will be a prize for the best program and we will try to put together a disk of the submissions for the club library. Several members have been asking about educational programs and also printer drivers for Atariwriter and Atariwriter+. If You have such things and can share them with the club (public domain) we would like to put them in the Library. Bring them to a meeting and see Chuck about adding them to the library.

About 50 members have paid their dues at the present time, but the list of delinquent members is too long. Send a check to George Nosky or bring it to the next meeting. (I guess if you have this magazine you are up to date with your dues and I don't need to tell you this, but if you know of members who haven't paid their dues.....)

...BUT D'YA KNOW WHAT GETS ME REALLY MAD!!?... IF IT WERE ANOTHER GIRL JOHNNY'S WITH ALOT LATELY, NO PROBLEM, BUT HOW DO YOU COMPETE WITH ATARI?
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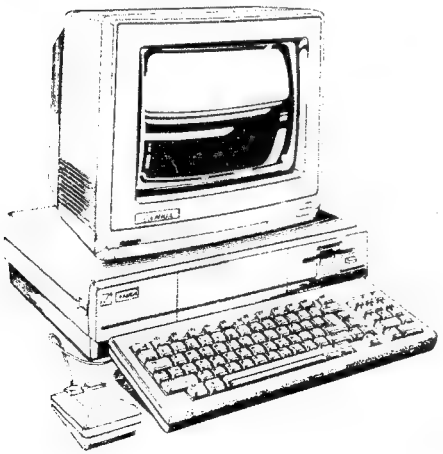
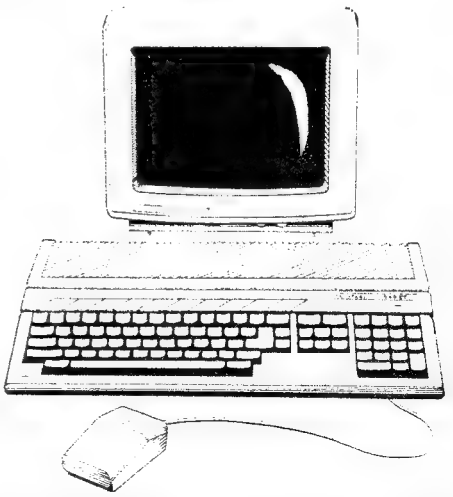




WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING ON APRIL 14 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting Minutes

REPORT ON 3/10/87 MEETING
BY MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 pm by Mike Pieronek. Mike announced that the feature demos for this meeting was WORD PROCESSING.

Mike Olin discussed his opinion that the club should organize with formally elected officers and develop a club "Charter" that would go into effect when the club first meets after summer break. Mike noted that there have been occasions where decisions had to be made concerning the entire group when the opinions of the members were not obtained. An attempt to formally organize the club should be aimed at establishing a more democratic procedures and to distribute some of the work load over a larger percentage of the membership. The membership approved such action and Mike Olin volunteered to begin the development of a WAUG Charter and will solicit aid from other members in the near future.

Mike also noted that the club is growing larger at every meeting and that many faces are familiar while the names remain elusive. Everyone was given a few moments to announce their names and give a few tidbits about themselves and their interest in WAUG and Atari.

Doug Feldman spent a few moments discussing the status of the WAUG Treasury. The treasury is currently nearly depeleted due to recent purchases of 8-bit and ST disks, the continuing expense of the Michigan Atari Newsletter (MAM) and the obligation towards room rental at Wines School.

The publisher of MAM has informed Doug of a 30 cent increase for each mailed copy of MAM along with a formula for reducing the per-copy cost by club sales of advertising. At the current rate, we cannot continue our association with MAM without completely depleting the Treasury within 3 months. The members were asked to consider the following options:

1) Volunteers will sell ads
2) Increase WAUG membership and renewal rates to reflect the additional cost
3) Disassociate from MAM and return to writing our own newsletter

Two WAUG members expressed an interest in producing a WAUG newsletter. Pattie and Bill Rayl showed a sample of their work for the members to consider. A decision must be made by the members at the next monthly meeting.

Doug announced again that the WAUG BBS would be retired on June 9 unless a volunteer is found to run it. Interested persons can leave him a message on the BBS (662-3689).

Mike Pieronek discussed his efforts to reorganize the 8-bit disk library. He passed out several copies of the new catalog and noted the disk number is prefixed with a category indicator. In the last month, he has increased the library from 35 to 56 master disks. Both Tim Grzechowski and Paul Walkowski volunteered to assist Mike in future library activities. (As always, disks will be sold to members only.)

The following persons demoed word processors: (see the feature articles in the March issue of MAM for descriptions)

Doug Feldman	Atari Writer Plus
Paul Walkowski	Writer's Tool
Mike Pieronek	Letter Perfect
Mike Pieronek	TextPro
Mike Pieronek	PaperClip XE
Craig Harvey	1st Word ST

The meeting was then adjourned for sales of library disks. Mike Olin and Bob Carlini demoed ICD's MIO for interested members. The next meeting of WAUG will be held on April 14 and will feature ARCADE GAMES with a new demo every 10 minutes.

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES MARATHON
MAY 12 --- GRAPHICS EDITORS
JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER ELECTIONS
NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST

Disk Library

WAUG 8-BIT DISK LIBRARY NEWS

At the March 10 meeting, Mike Pieronek described the improved and expanded 8-bit disk catalog and the new disk ordering procedure. The 56 disks in our library are now organized by program category as follows:

A = Antic Public Domain
C = Communications
F = Fonts & PICs
G = Games
L = Languages
M = AMS Music
P = Print Shop Utilities
U = Utilities
Z = Special Disks

Mike will passing out a complete print-out of the 8-bit catalog to all members who attend the next few meetings.

Because of the greatly expanded size of the library, the increased expense of maintaining several copies of each disk, and the inconvenience of duplicating disks during the meetings, Mike decided to start an advance ordering system for the purchase of WAUG 8-bit disks. AND there is a new economical pricing policy. WAUG members are invited to order disks by calling Mike at home or by leaving him a message on one of the local Atari Bulletin Boards (see the list at the end of the newsletter). One disk will cost $2.00. Two disks will cost $3.00, with the second disk on the flip side.

Mike also plans on presenting a 'DISK OF THE MONTH' at each meeting. This disk will be available for $2.00 without advance ordering. We hope these improvements will increase your enjoyment of the WAUG Library. Please feel free to make comments and suggestions at the next meeting.

ST Library

At the MArch 10 meeting, WAUG received a generous donation of 10 new library disks. Craig Harvey, our temporary ST Librarian says that there are now 15 different disks filled with excellent public domain programs for the ST. We need a volunteer from WAUG to catalog and manage the new ST library. Our new price for WAUG ST Library disks is now only $3.00. We also learned that Basic Bits 'N Bytes of Westland now sells 3 1/2 inch disks for $1.19/1 or $1.09/50.

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

Viewpoint

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE:
DISCUSSION OF WAUG OPTIONS
by Doug Feldman

At the March 10 meeting of WAUG, we discussed the financial problems caused by the recent rate increase instituted by the publisher of MAM. For the first 3 months of 1987, WAUG has paid 50 cents per issue for each active member. This included all mailing and reproduction costs. The only other cost involved is mailing the text file disk to Lansing by the 20th of each month.

The editor (John Nagy) has been in frequent contact with me during this period and informed me of his desire to expand and strengthen the editorial content of the magazine. This could be achieved by increasing the revenues from advertising or by increasing the cost per issue. In fact, the publisher has decided to apply both methods. The maximum charge per issue has been raised to 80 cents. However, a 30% commission will be subtracted from our magazine cost for any advertisements acquired by the club. There is only one month remaining in our contract with State Street Computer, and the commission for this ad is being credited to our costs for the month of April. Therefore, our net costs for April will be roughly 60 cents per issue. Obtaining a second advertiser could reduce costs below the original 50 cent figure.

At the March 10 WAUG meeting, we attempted to describe this situation and present several options to our members. At the rate of 80 cents per issue, our treasury could be easily depleted within 4 months. The first question posed to the membership was to determine how many persons wished to continue receiving MAM. Over half of the members present expressed a strong interest in continued participation with the magazine. The second question asked was whether anyone was willing to help secure advertisements, to gain sales commissions on our behalf. The vote was unamimously negative. Then we circulated a prototype of a new WAUG Newsletter printed by Pattie and Bill Rayl on a 520ST. This was viewed with much interest.

Several important comments were recorded during our group discussion. One member suggested that we should get a guaranteed subscription price for at least one year. Our newsletter editor should be notified prior to deletion or shuffling of news and review articles. We should establish some kind of policy about late arriving copies of MAM. WAUG would like every member to receive a copy before the meeting. Doug has been buying extra copies each month to pass out to members who did not receive a copy by the day of the meeting.

The final decisions were tabled until the April 14 meeting. Here is a summary of some options that we will need to vote on:

1) To elect a WAUG member responsible for obtaining advertisements for MAM

2) Establish financial incentives for obtaining additional advertising

3) To raise the club membership rate to $18 per year to cover the full cost of MAM subscriptions

4) To charge members on an individual basis for their personal copies of MAM

5) To return to our private publication and mailing of a WAUG newsletter

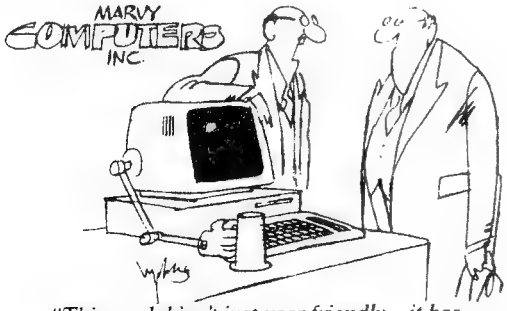
6) Possible combinations of these ideas

Please try to attend the April 14 meeting to of WAUG to contribute your ideas to these important decisions!

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO WAUG MEMBERS!

There will not be any WAUG meetings during the months of July and August. This is due to the closing of Wines School during the summer recess and to the need for R&R by your hard working WAUG officers.

We have decided to require members wishing to receive the July and August issues of MAM, to pay for them on a personal basis. If you wish to receive the July and August issues of MAM, please forward $1.60 to Doug Feldman by June 9, 1987.



"This model isn't just user friendly—it has a drinking buddy function."

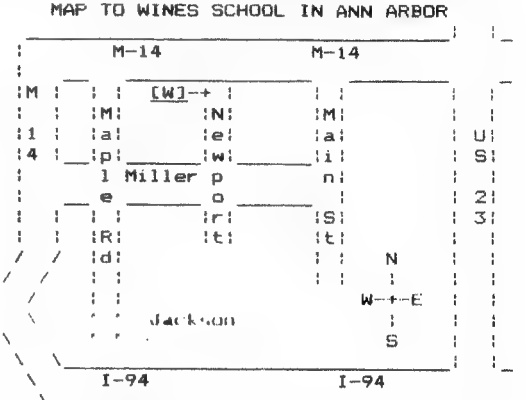
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

WAUG

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

April 11th at 2:00 pm.
May 16th at 2:00 pm.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley....President/(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt...Treasurer/Sec./(517)792-6029
Al Jennings...8-bit Disk Lib./(517)790-1980
Lance Middleton...ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman.....Assis. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8- bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non- TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

SPEAKING FROM THE PULPIT...

The March meeting saw the normal spring decline in attendance. I guess everybody doesn't have a year round computer hobby (read ADDICTION) like mine. Sigh. Anyway, on to serious matters. I have just been informed by John Nagy of CHAOS that the cost of the magazine is going up. It will cost the club $0.80 instead of $0.50 per issue. Although I love the Michigan Atari Magazine, it sure seems like a steep increase to me (60% !). We can offset the increase by finding an advertiser (we get 30% of the advertising rate applied to our mailing charges), so I'll see what I can do. We'll be discussing this at the April meeting, so be sure to show up!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

Games. Games! GAMES!! Yes, that's right, we're finally having a pure game meeting again. Not only that, if you show up, you can get a raffle ticket to win one of the two programs that the club purchased. When we left the last meeting, I still hadn't found the Pawn for the 8-bit, so I was told to buy a mystery (????) game. Of course, when I got home and called the dealer, the Pawn had showed up that same day. So the 8-bit game is no longer a mystery. This game is a graphics/adventure program with extremely detailed pictures and a text parser that leaves Infocom and the others in the dust. This fine program will be demoed by Char Davis.

On the ST side, we've got 10th Frame, a good bowling program. The creators of this game actually digitized all of the normal bowling sounds, so it sounds great! Stop by and see Paul Bork demo this excellent sport simulation!

Another ST game to be demoed is Championship Wrestling by Epyx. Dan Barrowman will show off his wrestling prowess with Pile- Drivers, Atomic Drops, and Body Slams! Be there to see the dust shaken from the rafters!!

REMEMBER! 10th Frame and The Pawn will be raffled off at the end of the meeting. Show up and try to win one of these! Raffle tickets are $1.00 each, and you must be a TAG member to purchase them.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

RELICS TO RELISH

We had a small turnout at the March meeting, but that didn't dampen the enthusiasm or the quality of the meeting! It was decided that the May meeting would focus on graphic programs that utilized a printer, and that we should have a raffle again! For the May meeting the club will purchase the following packages:

8-bit: News Station
ST: ??????????

We haven't decided yet what to raffle off for the ST, so try to think of something by the April meeting. In May, we will have the following demos:

8 bit: News Station
ST: Publishing Partner

The club decided to start carrying the disk version of ST-Log along with the disk version of Analog. Our membership is now nearly half ST'ers, and the difference between Analog with disk and both Analog and ST-Log with disk is only $54.00. A lot of members will benefit from this move.

This month's theme was Word Processing, and LeRoy Valley started it out by demoing Haba Writer II (for the ST), by Haba Systems Inc. The WP is a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) WP. It is capable of displaying light, normal, bold, italics, super and subscripts on screen. It offers true footnoting, a unique "glossary" function that lets you store anything (a phrase, a commonly used word, even printing codes) in a glossary for later retrieval, and all of the standard features like search/replace, cut/paste, and reformat document. All in all, a fine word processor!

Dan Barrowman was next on stage with a demo of Thunder! by Batteries Included. Thunder! is a spelling checker...well, it's actually TWO spelling checkers. You get both a desktop accessory and a stand alone version of the program. The desktop accessory version checks your spelling realtime, while you're typing. If you misspell a word, Thunder! beeps and you can correct it at that point. You can add your own dictionaries, and have them searched automatically, or just use the 80,000 word dictionary included. The stand alone version sports a few more features than the desktop version, and it will work with any file, including files from non-GEM WP's. NOTE: The desktop accessory version does not work with Haba Writer II, but the stand alone works fine!

Moving into the 8-bit section of the meeting, Marty Schmidt showed everyone how good 80 characters can look on an Atari 130XE. With his Omniview chip installed, he had a VERY legible 80 character display on a (dare I say it?) Commodore monitor. Along with the 80 columns, the chip also performs the same service as that of the Atari translator disk!

Marty then showed off the FREE WP that came with Omniview, Speedscript 80. This is a rewrite of the popular Speedscript that appeared in Compute! some time ago. Some new features and, of course, 80 column support, have been added to this version. Marty's premier WP, Letter Perfect, was then displayed in glorious 80 column format. When you purchase Omniview, you get a sheet that explains how to patch Letter Perfect (and Data Perfect) for 80 column support. Letter Perfect is a menu driven WP and, while complicated to learn, is an extremely powerful WP. One of the drawbacks is that the documents aren't stored as standard DOS files, but rather are stored in a custom format. You can purchase the LJK utilities disk to convert the files to standard DOS, so it's not a serious problem. Included with Letter Perfect is Spell Perfect, a companion spelling checker. If you want to avoid a lot of disk swapping, use two disk drives. All in all, it looks like an excellent package.

This concluded our regularly scheduled programming.

*** E B V ***

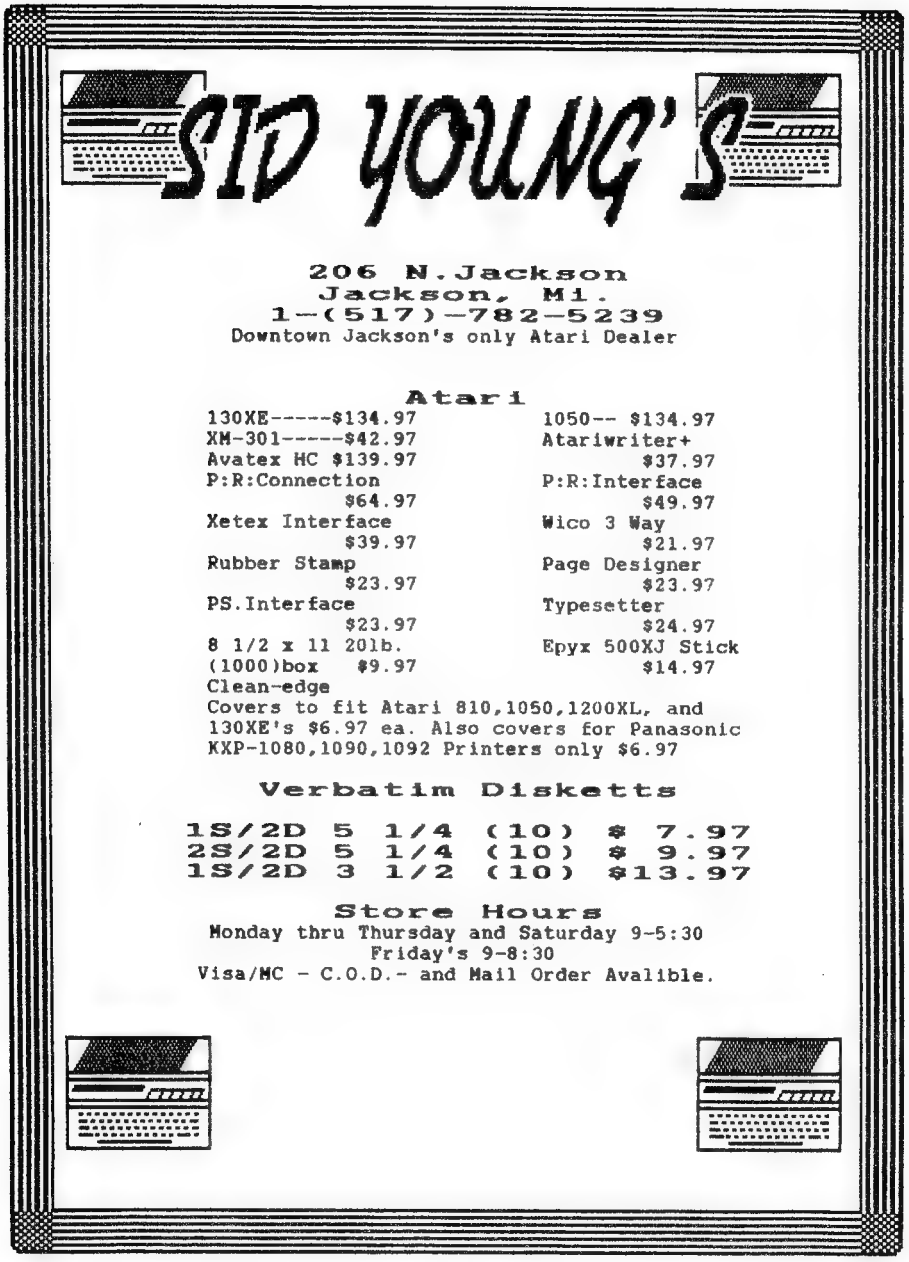
8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Paquette 800 XL
Gary Grover Disk Drive
Steve Sharp Color TV

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Ron Hoffman Monitor
Paul Bork 520 ST
Dan Barrowman Disk Drive

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.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CASCADES ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-9581
P-R Chairman	William Locke	782-6874
Membership Coord.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIP:

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson

Meeting Minutes

This months meeting was a big success, along with the C.A.C.E. Computer Fair. Congratulations to all those who participated. We even had visitors from Toledo and Battle Creek.

At the conclusion of Scott Boland's treasury report, Scott and some of the members identified potential areas for using some of the excess funds. The main emphasis is to support the club. The first area was to purchase some software which would be raffled off at each meeting. The intent was not to provide the club with extra income, but to provide the membership with an additional service. All agreed that this would be a good idea, but that we should wait until later in the year seeing that Attendance at the meetings typically takes a nose dive during the spring and summer. Next Wolfgang Mueller requested that the club purchase a box of disks for the ST library, which was agreed upon. The conversation then switched to providing hardware support for the club librarian (Bob Kingsbury). It was identified that Bob could use a computer so he would not have to tear down his system and bring it to the meetings and could save some wear and tear on his equipment. Suggestions were made for other components, i.e. disk drive, disk drive enhancement, monitor. Also, to assist Bob, it was recommended that we consider providing Bob with some financial backing to defer the cost of his private computer line and the many calls that he has made to obtain software for the club. Finally it was proposed that an MIO Board be purchased for Harold LaRue's BBS. Harold stated that he would purchase a hard disk drive for the board if the club would purchase the MIO Board. A resolution was passed to have the board develop a proposal, before the next meeting, for the above equipment. This proposal will be put to a vote of the members at the meeting. This will be an important vote, taking into account the dollar

value of these expenditures, so your attendance at the next meeting is important.

The new users SIG(Special Interest Group) was restarted again during the meeting. This group will meet at every meeting and at other times during the month as the need is demonstrated. It should be noted that this is an excellent way for new users of Atari Computers to learn about their machines.

Brent Fisher brought in an example of a shirt which a friend of his could supply to the club membership for approx. $4.00. The shirts are very nice and especially for the price. Discussion of the shirts revolved around what exactly should be imprinted on the shirt. Brent was requested to obtain a firm price and to develop a layout for the shirt. The club membership will vote on the final layout and orders will be taken at the next meeting.

Bill Locke noted to the membership that he has submitted the club information to ANTIC and Atari Explorer. Also, he is pursuing ads for Michigan Atari Magazine with potentially two groups who are interested in taking out ads. This is great, but Bill and our news letter could use more support in this area. So, keep your eyes and ears open for potential advertisers.

TREASURY REPORT

by Scott Boland

As of March 18th, 1987 the C.A.C.E. treasury has $594.65 in the bank account and $153.55 in petty cash. This gives the treasury a grand total of $748.20.

I would like to thank all of the members who donated their time and equipment to the computer faire we held at Westwood Mall. In my opinion the faire was a success, especially being our first attempt. We had eight new members join the club during the faire and received $53.00 in disk copy fees for our public domain disk library.

I would like to welcome nine new members to our club. They are: Craig Schaff, Eric Vincent, Paul Bayzlewicz, David Drew, Bob Ward, David LaHote, Anthony Beveridge, Juan Paez, and Bill Blakley. Please consider ways that you can contribute to the club, as well as ways the club can help you.

I have received brochures from Atari Corporation about GENIE, the telecommunications network from General Electric. GENIE has waived their normal $18.00 signup charge to ATARI users for a limited time. As I have a limited number of pamphlets, please call me about their availability. GENIE has the lowest per hour rate ($5.00) that I know of.

I have one last subject to cover. I have been informed by John Nagy of C.H.A.O.S. that the newletter cost to member clubs has been increased. The rate has been increased from $.50 per member per month to $.80 per member per month. This brings the yearly charge per member to $9.60 for the newsletter. This is only $.40 less than our yearly dues. John also informed me that any advertising that we send in to the newsletter, out club gets to keep 30% of the advertising fees. This should help to offset the price increase. Please try to attend the April meeting, as we have much to discuss. Thank you, see you in April.

Meetings

Coordination Corner
by Brent Fisher

Well I'd like to welcome you all once again to another Coordination Corner and to start off I'd like to say that I'm sorry that I didn't get this out in time last month but I have definite plans to do so this time. I suppose to start off I'd like to thank everyone from the month before, so to begin I'd like to thank Jimmie Boyce for the use of his monitor, John Charles for the use of his computer, Donald Elliott for the use of his disk drive, Joe Garner for the use of his computer, Bill Howland for the use of his disk drive, and last but not least Dick Kuhn for the use of his moniter.

Well how is that for a long list. As for demonstrations, a bit of thanks to William Locke for some demos of some of the type-in programs from Analog and Antic, Harold LaRue for allowing us to see Hardball one more time, and Harold again for showing us Karate Kid II for the ST's.

And for this last month I'll start off thanking Robert Towbridge for bringing his moniter and disk drive, Joe Cripps for his computer and disk drive, and Paul Babcock for his computer and disk drive.

One demo for next month that I'm pretty certain that we'll have is the Antic voice circuit, and possibly another sound demonstration.

Well I suppose that that's that for this month, if anyone has any comments, suggestions, (good or bad, I mean I can't know unless someone says something to me) or would like to demo something be it hardware or software just give me a call, or leave some E-mail to me on one of the local BBS's.

Disk Library

Librarian's Report
By Bob Kingsbury

Here it is time again to get ready for the next news letter and meeting. As many of you know our computer fair was a big success. We gained some new members and alot of exposure in the community.

The library continues to grow faster than I can keep up with it. With the help of a couple of assistance this will not be a problem much longer. The new type of listing seems to be well received and easier to use. If you have some input on the new listing system please let me know at the next meeting. As for the listing, a new updated one will be at the April meeting.

DON'T MISS THE APRIL MEETING

There are some important things that need your input and attendance. Number one is the 60% increase we now pay for this news letter. Do we need it or should we go back to publishing our own or except other offers to combine news letters with other groups. Second is the purchase of more hardware for the club. This and more are reasons way you should not miss APRIL'S meeting. The money we spend on news letters and hardware is yours, so be there to have a say in how it is used.

At the next meeting I will show the installation of a write protect switch for the 1050 drives. This will be done without any cutting or drilling to your drive case.

See you in APRIL

Alisa Hickey

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GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

By: Daniel Youngs
616-388-3164

We had a good group to our last meeting. It's seems that we may have picked up a few new members at our computer fair. This something that we need, new members, people with new idea's and input. The March meeting was on Money and Business and everyone seemed to get something out of it.

The old business:

We are working on the BBS and have started to order our hardware and software. We need a SYSOP, this person needs to be someone with a local phone (we would provide an extra phone line and pay the monthly bill). We will teach you what you need to know to run it, if you think that this is something that might interest you then please give me a call.

We had several people sign up for MULE so we will start play at the April meeting.

(Players will be David Altoft, Kurt Grooman, Steve Haddix, Gus Guzinski, the top two winners will play Maggi Connell, and John Staley if there's time).

The news letter price has increased from .50 to .80 and any ads that we can get we will get commission of them.

Steven has just about got our library done so that we should have it at the next meeting.

Remember that the next meeting the theme will be baseball so bring all your baseball games we will be demonstrating some of the latest ones.

The disk of the month will be good strategy games so bring your $2.00

We hope to have our Analog disks at the next meeting. For some reason they don't seem to want to send them out.

Dues are $20.00 per year and this entitles the member to one years subscription to our news letter and accesses to the clubs library. Meetings are the second Sat of each month (April 9, 1987) at Dewing hall Kalamazoo College starting at 2:00.

Disk Library

THE LIBRARIAN REPORT
By: STEPHEN BUECHLER

I am still working on the library, but hopefully I will have it ready for the April meeting. The disks will have directories on the disk jackets and will be arranged in the disk boxes by category. I still need a program to list out all the programs in the library to my printer. If anyone out there has a good program that would do this, give me a call at 616-323-9573. I have found a couple user groups that we are the process of trading with and will have new programs to mix in with our old ones to bring new life to our club disk library. Don't forget, if any of you have any programs that you think are good and would like to put them in our club library, call me at the number above.

Another month gone by!

Last months Finance disk seemed to be a hit! At the next meeting, I hope to have 5 disks available. We have 2 printshop icon disks, Analog 52, a game disk, and a disk with the Archiver utility, which compresses files into a much smaller space. This saves time when sending files over modem, and saves space when storing them for backup.

Dave Oldenberg
(616)435-8263

Atari ST News

Information about the ST Transformer
as of 03/09/87

By Darek Mihocka (CIS 73657,2714)

Programmed by Darek Mihocka
Additional programming and all night testing by
Ignac Kolenko
Hardware supplied by:

Xanth Computer Systems
600 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington

The purpose of this document about the ST Transformer is: - to explain its purpose and give a history of its development - to give the latest information about the ST Transformer - to discuss the legal problems with this program and why I can't release it to the public for all former Atari 400/800 owners - to find other programmers to work on this project.

For those of you unfamiliar with the name, you have seen it as the Atari 800 Emulator Demo or the Apple II Emulator.

Part 1:The history

When Atari introduced the ST computers, I was then the owner of an Atari 400, bought way back in 1981 with all my summer's earnings. Like many other people I spent a considerable amount of money on my system for software and disk drives. About the only piece of hardware that I could use on the ST was my FX80 printer. This is not too useful as none of the software works. So I held off buying an ST for over a year as I waited for Atari to introduce some kind of a device or program to allow me to run old software. They never did. I finally sold the 400 and bought the ST anyway because after using 68000 based in machines at my university, I was impressed by its power and already had a program in mind.

The implementation: The first project I decided to work on was to somehow run the old software so that all that money didn't all go to waste. I considered 2 approaches:

- the first approach is to write a program that reads a binary file from a 400/800 and convert each machine language instruction into a 68000 instruction. This would then create a file on the ST that would run about 10 times the speed of the original file!

Problems: - how do you tell the difference between code and data? - how to handle self modifying code? - how to handle the hardware registers?

- the second approach is to write an interpreter, similar to the way BASIC interprets a tokenized program, or the way that a real microprocessor executes code. You read in a byte of memory, determine which 6502 instruction it is, and execute it. The real 6502 executes microcode. I would use 68000 instructions.

Problems: - the overhead of processing each instruction is greater than the time it takes to actually execute it.
- how to handle hardware registers?

I chose the second approach because it solves the first two problems of the first approach, and shares the third problem. The problem of speed is also in both approaches. Software running at ten times the speed is usually unusable. This is similar to the problem when some IBM PC software is run on an AT or even worse, a Compaq 386 (18 times faster). It is always possible to use software running slower. The unknown is how slow the software would run. The hardware problem can be solved by a similar interpreter which checks which register is being accessed and does something accordingly.

First results:

The first version of the 6502 interpreter was written in Megamax C in August. As it turned out, the unknown speed was about 7% of the speed of a real 6502. This does not include the extra interpretation of hardware. It was obvious that hand coded 68000 code was needed. About a month later, I had the hand coded version sort of working at about 30% of the speed. To make the hardware interpreter would be difficult, because of the dozens of hardware locations in a 400/800. I chose then to first do an Apple II hardware emulator, because there are only 2 vital locations needed to get it to work: the keyboard and the screen. The next month was spent debugging the many bugs that crept into the 6502 interpreter and porting software from . Finally it worked, at about 25% of the speed.

This is the version that you have seen as the Apple II emulator.

First Problems:

One problem with all emulators is inherent in their design: to emulate the software of another machine, you must transfer that software. When I approached Apple about this, they told me that what I am doing is illegal,

since I copied the ROMs of Ignac's no name][clone, which had ROMs probably derived from an Apple. I approached Apple Canada about getting the real ROMs from them, plus the code for Apple DOS, and anything else they'd want to let me try. As it turned out, they saw my project as software piracy and told me to forget it. I guess they didn't want to expand to the ST market anyway. After the Apple told me they weren't interested, I decided to stop spending more time on Apple emulation. I ported over my copy of the Translator disk's image of the Revision B ROMs. I chose those ROMs because they are made to run with 64K of RAM, which is what the 6502 interpreter sees when it is executing. I also ported a copy of Atari Basic to use as a test file. After only a few days of hacking the Apple][routines, I got a very primitive version of the Atari emulator working. It only supported a few graphics modes and still had a major 6502 bug, but it sort of worked. I uploaded it to my BBS and to Atari's BBS as the Atari 800 Emulator Demo.

Part 2: the Atari 800 emulator

What happened then was a big shock. I got a phone call from one of the Atari BBS sysops telling me that Atari was not pleased with what I had done. They too considered my program as piracy. I was told that I would be contacted within a few days to discuss the emulator. No one ever called back, and I have never been able to get through to anyone that would discuss it with me. The secretaries usually screwed me around on the phone. Attempts to reach someone willing to talk on Compuserve also failed.

What I currently have is a program that appears to execute 6502 code according to the 6502 specs at about 20% of the speed. This includes the overhead of the hardware interpreter. The hardware supported so far includes:

- graphics modes 0,1,2,3,6,6+,7,7+,and 8 - most display lists, no matter how complex - most keyboard keys, including START, SELECT, OPTION, RESET, caps, inverse, and BREAK. - the color registers, and a few other miscellaneous locations - most read and write DOS operations - 1 joystick port - printer output - Runs most BASIC software I've downloaded from BBSs and tested.

Not supported yet:

- GTIA modes - player missle graphics - sound registers - a combination of the two mentioned approaches, where parts of the operation system are hand coded to 68000 code and executed directly, not interpreted. This is already done for the D: and P: drivers, but I plan to eventually do the whole operating system which would result in a significant speed increase.

Part 3: Legal Problems

According to Apple and Atari, it is illegal for me to distribute the emulator any more because I had included the ROMs with the demos. That is the reason I have not released anything in over 2 months. I respect their legal right, but I also believe that Atari has an obligation to all the tens of thousands of 8 bit owners who helped build the Atari empire. The only people who can make a perfectly legal emulator are Atari themselves. I have spent about 500 hours of my time planning, programming, and testing my program. This may seem like a lot, but it works out to about 10 weeks of full time work, or about 2 to 3 weeks work for a team of Microsoft caliber programmers, which I assume Atari has. With their technical knowledge of both the 8 bit and the ST computers, I don't see why Atari couldn't have released an fully implemented emulator 18 months ago. They were quick to introduce the CP/M emulator. I've compared the code of my program and theirs, and it is quite similar. So they are half done already. Until they do, I will keep working on my program until it is functional enough to run most software that can be downloaded. Once released, it will be up the individual user to copy their ROMs over to the ST. Atari says that's illegal. For as long as the people do it for their own use, I do not see this as being illegal. I do not have access to high priced lawyers, so I am hoping that Atari will finally talk to me and come to an agreement that will benefit us all.

Part 4: Programmers Wanted

Most of the emulator is written in 68000 code, with C code handling the less critical routines. It has been suggested that I write my program for the Amiga, because its superior graphics would make it easier to implement player missle graphics and the other features. Since I have never programmed the Amiga, I cannot make the Amiga version. What I would also like to do is write hardware emulators for other computers, like the Commodore 64, VIC 20, Color Computer, Sinclair, etc. Anyone proficient in 68000 programming that would be interested in writing those modules starting sometime next fall or winter should contact me.

Until then, keep an eye out on your local BBS for the ST Transformer which I hope to have released in June. I will update the situation on the board I hang out on, Megabaud 416-243-9519. Anyone having any suggestions on the program or who can help me with the legal questions can reach me on Compuserve or write to me (before May 1, 1987) at 5023 148th Ave. N.E. #6207, Bellevue, Washington.

][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][ ][

Industry Report

The Allentown Atari-Fest
By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

Although there was not a lot of new products shown at the Allentown show, I did find a few interesting things.

But first, lets cover all of the rumors, and updates on Atari products. At the first seminar held on Saturday, Mark Jenson, Technical Support Specialist for Atari, fielded questions from a hardware-hungry crowd.

*XEP80 (80-column card) is finished and has been sent to the manufacturing folks. Price is expected to be $79.95, and will be on the store shelves by summer.

*AtariWriter and Silent Butler have been modified to work with the 80-column card, and will be ready at the same time the card hits the stores.

*SX212 Modem (1200 baud)-More work is being done. No release date has been set. I will go into this a bit later.

*Atari PC Clone Computers are still planned, and Atari hopes to have them ready by summer. They will come with EGA mode and SmartMono, and are expected to sell for $699. There were rumors that the Atari PC was now being sold in Europe, but Neil Harris stated this was not true. He figures there is confusion between the Atari and Commodore versions (Commodore has a PC clone currently available in Europe). Not much comments about the FCC problems or licensing troubles though.

*MEGA ST is still being worked on. Plans are for 1- 2- and 4-meg versions, each will include the Blitter chip. Expect to see this by June (according to Neil)

*Blitter Chip is complete, but work still needs to be done on the operating system to support it.

*The Laser Printer is planned to be released this summer at a cost of $1500. With the cost of the ST-MEG, you can now have an excellent system for around $3000!

*SH205 Hard Drive-Not much news. Work is being done to make this drive daisy-chainable, and may be what's holding things up.

*GDOS has been finished and is currently being shipped to developers.

*The Atari Game Machine will be available in June. Atari expects this to be a huge success, and hopes this will be a major source for 8-bit software. No other information was available.

*AMY chip-Yes, it's still being worked on. It seems there was a working version that was put together on a breadboard, but their engineers could not put it into silicone. It's back to the drawing board.

*3 1/2" Drive (8-Bit). HUH? What 3.5 drive? Oh, yeah, that one. Well, it has been put on hold, and according to Neil, if he has his way it will never be released! Even though Sparta-dos has added support for this drive in their Sparta-Dos X cartridge, and OSS has done lots of work on a new DOS, Atari feels there is not enough demand for this drive. I guess us poor 8-bitters have no use for a drive that holds 300k.....YEAH, SURE!!!!!

In other news, Neil Harris stated Atari plans to launch more TV commercials this summer. Also expect to see Atari very prominently on Genie.

Now for the bad news. The 1200 baud modem still has some work needed before it can be released. Rumor has it that the problem is with the compatibility with the 8-bit interface. I have heard rumors about this before, so I questioned Neil about it.

Atari decided to create an all new interface that is compatible with.....NOTHING! They will include a handler with the modem, and Keith Ledbetter is updating his excellent terminal program (EXPRESS!) to support the new handler. Count your blessings, it could have been XE-TERM.

OTHER VENDORS

Disk Of the Month attended, and was selling loads of software at 30% off retail. They are a national mail-order company and will beat any price.

Static Engineering was showing a product called FUNCTION AID. This product is a clear plastic template holder that sits above your function keyes. You can now figure out what all those keys do by simply looking at the card. It's a nidea, but for $28.95 I think you can figure out a better way.

Diverse Data Products showed off two new products. MFD-720 is a double-sided drive for the Atari ST. It features a heavy-duty metal housing, internal power supply, and an on/off switch located on the front for easier reach. The price is $249.95. I picked up one of them, so I'll have a review of it in the near future. Also shown was a 1-meg upgrade kit. Since I just purchased an ST I'm not up on these

Here are a few thoughts on YEMACYB.

"..., the results have been very satisfactory. Quite frankly, much better than what I had hoped for."
Robert J. Sarna, Northbrook IL

"AMAZING printouts"
John Q. Leasia, P.E., Royal Oak MI

"I am very pleased with the software package. It saved me over $200!"
David C. White, OSTERHOLZ HIGH SCHOOL, APO NY

"excellent...very enjoyable and rewarding"
Stanley M. Simbor, Inkster MI

"sharper and more soild than a typical Okimate printout"
Jeff Brenner, COMPUTER SHOPPER

"I think it is a great product"
Thomas D. Iowa, Littleton CO

"a really satisfying piece of software that's also easy to use"
Frank E. Kweder, Ft. Meyers FL

"a great addition to my collection."
Nick Callas, Lincolnshire IL

"You may not know it yet, but you need this software."
Michael L. Clayton, Rochester MI

"have been very pleased with it. It is one of the BEST printer utilities to come out for the ATARI computer in a long time."
Thomas M. Dewar II, Astoria NY

"I LOVE IT!"
Susan Johnson, Highland UT

"I was real impressed with my first picture, and it got easier with my second picture."
James L. Thompson, Battle Creek MI

"I find the printing program 'GREAT'..."
Clifford O. Gross, San Antonio TX

"What the HECK is a YEMACYB?"
Jeffery A. Cass, Mattydale NY

"YEMACYB is a funny name for a very powerful color screen dump by ELECTRONICAL SOFTWARE."
Dr. Roland B. Herman, W.A.N.D. Newsletter, White Plains NY

FOLKS, WE DIDN'T STOP WORKING. YEMACYB HAS BEEN IMPROVED! IT IS WITHOUT QUESTION, THE VERY BEST COLOR PRINTING SOFTWARE FOR YOUR ATARI 8-BIT COMPUTER SYSTEM!

It is faster, produces more colors, is more flexible, and easier to use than any other printing system, PERIOD.

Besides allowing your B&W dot matrix printer to produce outstanding color artwork quality prints, YEMACYB has features to help you create any color graphic that you desire. New features (Rev. 1.30) include: More graphics and clip art; Expanded ramdisk support; Increased graphics compatiblility; Better graphics editing.

You'll need an ATARI 800 (or compatible), 4 printer ribbons (one each: yellow, magenta, cyan, and black), and one of the supported printers: C.ITOH Prowriter, STAR SG-10 (Gemini 10x, Delta 10), and any EPSON MX/80 graphics compatible model.

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- EPSON MX-RX-FX/80 PACK --- $53.95 plus $4.00 S&H
- PANASONIC 1080/1090 PACK --- $69.95 plus $3.00 S&H
- SG-10 (Delta 10, Gemini 10x) PACK --- $46.95 plus $3.00 S&H

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hardware upgrades, so I'm not sure if this is a bargain or not. The sales info states you do not need to add a larger power supply, and requires 3 solder connections. Some of the more experienced folks I talked to were quite impressed.

Timeworks showed their line of business application/productivity programs. Demonstrated were such programs as Word Writer, DataManager, and others.

Astra Systems was showing their new hard drive for the ST. Called the System HD+, this 20-meg drive features a built-in 3.5 Double Sided drive, built in power supply, and very small footprint (5 1/4 x 4 1/4 x 12). Included in the $999 price is BRS, a backup and restore program. This drive was left on from Friday night until Sunday afternoon, and never felt warm when you touched it!

Astra also showed their new 8-bit drive "THE ONE". This drive features single/double density and is double sided (software selectable). It is also the first drive to feature a direct drive motor. It also has a built in printer interface! Total storage capacity is 360k. I found this a very nice drive for people looking to increase their storage but not wanting to buy a hard drive. It also comes with a free copy of TOPDOS.

Disk Publications (the folks that bring you Aladdin Disk-Magazine) was there to show off their ST version of Aladdin. They also announced plans for an Amiga version for those poor soles who took the wrong path (eh?).

Atari Explorer sold some of their past issues, and sold subscriptions at a discounted rate. I finally broke down and bought one.

Cal Com brought a load of hardware and Software. They are a local dealer but do some mail-order sales also. From the looks of the crowd that was always packed at their table, I guess they did a lot of business.

MicroDraft, the maker of CHIPMUNK software, had a table set up and were demonstrating their product.

Shelbourne Software was showing their ST Pool game, and the Shuffleboard game, both of which were at the Pittsburgh show. Nothing new here.

Alpha Systems showed their new Color ComputerEyes. Brand new was a cartridge based 520k Ramdisk for the ST. This cart plugs into any ST and allows you to quickly access additional ram. You can not use it as programmable ram however. One advantage is if you own a 520 or 1040 ST and plan to upgrade to the 1 meg ST, you can use this "Ramcart" on those machines too. The cost is $199.

Progressive Computer Applications had a number of desktop publishing programs on display, such as The Graphic Artist. This is advertised to be the first program to combine desktop publishing and computer aided design in a single environment. Some of the sample pictures were fantastic!

White Lion Software, located in New York, showed a wide range of programs and support disks for TypeSetter. Their newest program, QIX-PIX was getting a lot of attention, not to mention their Graphic Libraries. Folks who are having problems understanding TypeSetter may want to look at the tutorials on these disks.

Michtron was demonstrating their new picture digitizer (much like Computereyes) for the ST. Called the REALTIZAR, this device takes your picture in just 5 seconds! They also demonstrated many of their game programs such as Karate Kid II and Space Shuttle.

Hybrid Arts was the hit of the show. In addition to their demonstrations of midi hardware and software, they also helped to put on the worlds first MIDI-MAZE tournament! For more information, check out the article located elsewhere in this newsletter.

Current Notes made their first appearance at an AtariFest, and was selling subscriptions to their magazine, and also some ST library disks.

Quantum Microsystems showed their line of ST products, such as Deskcart, an accessory cartridge that adds 14 more functions and utilities. These products were shown at previous shows, and QMI had no new products.

J&S Computers, Computer Games, and Royal Software were also there to represent the local dealers.

Stone Age Software had a couple of interesting programs available. Encrypt takes any data, text, or program and encrypts the program to prevent unauthorized access. They are so sure of it's reliability they are offering a reward for the first person to crack their system. Other programs shown included a chemistry spreadsheet (oh boy!).

Best Products brought along their usual line of odd-ball, and hard to find Atari hardware parts. They also had several interesting collector items for sale, like a brass Atari-logo paperweight.

Sense Software showed a new program called DBSENSE. This is a text-based relational database program with it's own programming language and word processor. This was WAY over my puny 8-bit head, but Bill Wilkinson was really impressed with it.

Analog, which has been supporting the AtariFest movement all along, had their table set up, and had a few surprises too. Right off the presses was their latest Analog magazine, and a new book/magazine called "An Atari 8-bit Extra". This is a collection of never before published articles, programs, and tutorials. Expect to see it on the bookshelves real soon.

So ends another AtariFest. It appears that about 2000 Atari fans passed through the show, and the dealers stated they sold a lot of merchandise.

The next show (close to Michigan) will be held in Buffalo in April. The Michigan Atari General Information Conference (MAGIC) also plans to host an AtariFest on August 29-31 at the Southfield Hilton hotel. Another show within driving distance will be held in Chicago, sometime in July. No other information is available at this time.

These shows are a lot of fun. There are seminars held regularly during the show, door prizes, refreshments, and all sorts of happenings. Plan to attend a show near you!

Atari News

SCHEDULED ATARI FAIRS

APRIL 1987
Salt Lake City, UT
Fri 04/10/87, Sat 04/11/87
Sponsor: ACE of Salt Lake
Contact: Chris Christopolus
(801) 486-8009
P.O. Box 26664, Salt Lake City, UT 84126

APRIL 1987
Buffalo Convention Center - Buffalo, NY
Sat 04/25/87, Sun 04/26/87
Sponsor: Western New York Atari User Group
Contact: Bill Beerbower (716) 875-6555
P.O. Box 59, Buffalo, NY 14216

MAY 1987
Infomart - Dallas, TX
Fri 05/08/87, Sat 05/09/87
Sponsor: DAL-ACE, North Texas ST Users
Contact: Bill Bailey (214) 240-4337
4834 Collingwood, Garland, TX 75043

MAY 1987
Seattle Center, FLAG Pavillion - Seattle, WA
Sat 05/16/87, Sun 05/17/87
Sponsor: 5 local user groups
Contact: Bruce Noonan (206)
775-0545/745-2867
21700 76 Ave. West, Edmonds, WA 98020

JUNE 1987

JULY 1987
Ramada Hotel O'Hare - Rosemont, IL
Sat 07/25/87, Sun 07/26/87
Sponsor: Consortium of local user groups including SCAT, LCACE & CL.A.U.G.
Contact: Rich Bollmeier (312) 662-8676
2928 Brookside, Waukegan, IL 60085

AUGUST 1987
Detroit, MI -- Details forthcoming

SEPTEMBER 1987
Glendale Civic Auditorium - Glendale, CA
Sat 09/19/87, Sun 09/20/87
Sponsor: ACENET
Contact: John King Tarpinian
(818) 760-1831
6055 Cahuenga Blvd. #2,
N. Hollywood, CA 91606

SEPTEMBER 1987
Worcester Centrum - Worcester, MA
Sat 09/26/87, Sun 09/27/87 - tentative
Sponsor: Boston Computer Society
Alan Glick (617) 296-8286
1 Center Plaza, Boston, MA 02108

OCTOBER 1987
Washington D. C. - facility not determined
Sat 10/17/87
Sponsor: NOVATARI
Contact: Joe Waters (703) 450-4761
122 N. Johnson Rd., Sterling, VA 22170

NOVEMBER 1987
Palm Beach, FL - facility not determined
Sat 11/21/87, Sun 11/22/87
Sponsor: Atari Club of the Palm Beaches
Contact: Jim Woodward (305) 736-5532
605 S.W. 1st Court,
Boynton Beach, FL 33435

NOVEMBER 1987
San Jose, CA - facility not determined

For further information contact; Sandi Austin, Atari Corp, 1196 Borregas Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, (408) 745-2010.

Review

The Worlds First MIDI-MAZE Tournament!

By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

I hate kids! Well, not all kids. The small ones that can't handle a joystick are OK (I guess). But those other ones...

Like that little 10-year old girl standing in front of me in line at the MIDI-MAZE game. She

had blond hair, a cute red dress, and a ribbon in her hair. All she did was giggle!

She looked up at me and gave me this cute little smile. But I knew she was just trying to mess with my mind, trying to psych me out. I put on my best Dirty Harry face and growled at her! She just giggled some more and took her place behind an ST computer.

We are about to compete in the Worlds First Midi-Maze contest. Midi-Maze was written by Xanth Software, and is being distributed by Hybrid Arts, the folks who have all that midi-music stuff. And no wonder, since this game uses the midi jack on the ST to allow up to 16 computers to be connected to each other, thus allowing 16 players to compete at once!

Hybrid Arts, along with Casio, have donated a Casio synthesizer, plus software, valued at over $800, to be given away as first prize. So this was a serious contest, with lots of eager players were waiting their chance to play. This was no place for kids! (Geez, does she have to giggle all the time?)

Suddenly, the game begins. I start dashing around the maze, and soon sneak up on an unsuspecting player. Two quick shots and he disappears!

Midi-Maze is sort of like PAC-MAN. You are in control of a round balloon shaped ball with a Happy-Face painted on it. If the Happy-Face is looking at you, then you know your opponent can see you too. It's possible to sneak up on another player when his back is turned, then shoot-em in the back.

You are placed in a 3D maze, and all you see are the walls. The object of the game is to move your player around the maze looking for other players. By pressing the joystick button, you launch a round ball of energy at your opponent. With a satisfying popping sound, you know you have hit your mark.

I'm in the lead now, but the green player is right behind me. I turn the corner and blast another poor Happy-Face.

The screen is divided into three sections. The larger portion contains the actual maze. You are given a "rats-eye" view of the maze, so all you see are long hallways and walls. the upper corner contains the status chart. As you kill an opponent, your "marker" moves up the chart to the top. You are also shown the status of all the other players. The first person to kill 10 Happy-Face's wins the game. Thus the more popular name for this game "Kill a Happy-Face".

Near the side of the screen is a list of players you killed. This is not really needed, just something to fill up the screen, I guess.

It looks like a two way race now between me and the green Happy-Face! Just then I hear this giggle. I peek over at the kid and notice that she is putting on a glove. Not just any glove.....this was a custom-made, patent-leather, joystick glove! And I notice on her screen that SHE is the green player!

"Hey Ref, look at that" I screamed, pointing at her hand.

"Nothing in the rules about that" , he says, with this big grin on his face.

OK, this kid is dead meat! NO MERCY! I just hope she doesn't go crying to her mother when....

Just then a green energy ball shoots past my face, missing me by just inches! I spin around and dash down a hallway, around a corner....right into a dead end alley! I turn around just in time this green Happy-Face come around the corner with guns blasting. I didn't last long.

Then I here this giggle again. I look down and she is giving me this big snot-eating winners grin. Then she giggles some more and runs off to find her mother. I make a silent promise that from now on I would drive over every bicycle I find parked too close to the street!

Fighting back tears, I went searching for Frank Foster, President of Hybrid Arts, to get some more information about the game. It seems the maze we are currently playing on was designed by Neil Harris. Neil snuck into an early round of the tournament and plastered everyone! The players just kept mumbling "Who is that guy?" (No kidding!) Neil has played this game at other AtariFests, and has lots of experience at it.

Frank stated that Midi-Maze will soon be released (April 1) for $39.95. Although it is much more fun to hook up 16 ST's, you can still use this with one. The computer can play with up 16 computer-controlled players. Adding other ST's is very simple to do too.

It also was rumored that there would be an 800 number available so you could call up and play against other players, (This was even printed in the local newspaper!) But Frank stated that was not true. The maze itself can be designed by the player by simple creating a new data file. The one being used on the tournament was designed to have some wide-open areas for a free-for-all type battle, and a few long hallways for the braver players.

Anyway, this game was a huge success, and Hybrid Arts plans to have it at most of the other AtariFests around the country. He plans to bring it to the Detroit show in August too.

Well, after a long day looking at booths, and playing several more games of Midi-Maze, I finally decided to head back to my hotel room. But first I wanted to stop at the Analog booth to get one of their latest Analog magazines. As I walked up to the booth, the man said "Sorry, I just gave the last copy out".

Just then I here this giggle. I look down to see that same blond kid with the red dress and the ribbon in her hair reading the LAST copy of Analog. She looks up and gives me that same snot-eating grin, then goes back to reading the magazine.

"You wouldn't happen to own a bicycle, would you?" I asked.

Software

NEEDED: HELP WITH SYNCALC
Tom Siemietkowski (GCACUG)

I have been at the keyboard for many hours the past couple of weeks working on a GOLF SCOREKEEPER for our golf league. This will include the individual weekly scores and summary for each individual and a totalization of team standings. At first this didn't sound too complicated but as things progressed and more variables surfaced I became glued to my computer.

We have individual matches to total and calculate-playing match and medal together, then combine these for team totals with handicaps, and to top that off we are a traveling league so we don't play the same course twice. What did you say LOTS OF LUCK ?

I have only worked with SYN-CALC on one other occasion and that was out of a book for a tax spreadsheet. It is a lot easier than programming but hard to get used to their commands and how to manipulate them to come up with the results you are after. Hope to have a demonstration by next meeting.

If there are any of you out there in Michigan land who are familiar with SYN-CALC and know of articles or books on SYN-CALC and its usage I can use all the help I can get.

ST

ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

How many of you have those nice double sided drives that can hold up to 828K, and yet you still have all of your protected software on the original single sided disks? A lot of you? Well, this month I'm going to show you how to convert many of them over to double sided format.

My primary tool to accomplish this task is Procopy, a backup program available from most dealers for about $30 (or directly from Proco Products for $34.95). Why Procopy, you might ask. Very simply: 1) Procopy backs up every piece of software that I've ever tried it on and... 2) Procopy has a nice feature called ANALYZE (more about this later).

The current version of Procopy that I'm using is 1.32. In order to accomplish the task which we've laid out for ourselves, we need to keep in mind the following conditions: * The disk which we are converting MUST have files on it visible from GEM. In other words, we can't convert a program like Time Bandits to a double sided disk. * The disk must be copyable using Procopy. * NEVER work on the original disk! * We need to determine where the protection is on the original disk.

Our first order of business is to determine exactly where the protection is on the original disk. We do this by using the ANALYZE feature of Procopy. ANALYZE looks at each track and then reports whether the track is standard, or has been modified (protected) in some way. The following is a sample listing from an ANALYZE run:

```
TRACK 4D
4D 00 01 02        4D 00 02 02        4D 00 03 02
4D 00 04 02        4D 00 05 02        4D 00 06 02
4D 00 07 02        4D 00 08 02        4D 00 09 02

TRACK 4E
4E 00 01 02        4E 00 02 02        4E 00 03 02
4E 00 04 02        4E 00 05 02        4E 00 06 02
4E 00 07 02        4E 00 08 02        4E 00 09 02
4E 00 0A 02

TRACK 4F
4F 00 01 02        4F 00 06 02        4F 00 02 02
4F 00 07 02        4F 00 03 02        4F 00 08 02
4F 00 04 02        4F 00 43 02 crc    4F 00 09 02
4F 00 05 02 shr    4F 00 21 02        4F 00 2C 02

TRACK 50 ***UNFORMATTED***
```

First, lets explain what all of those numbers mean. The first two digits are the track number, the second two are the side number (0 and 1 for a double sided disk), the third two are the actual sector number, and the last two are a status bit (02 is normal, anything else is modified or a problem). If anything is written next to the track, we have definitely found either a protected track, or a damaged one.

Looking at what we have in the sample, track 4D is a standard TOS formatted track with 9 sectors, numbered 1-9. Track 4E is a standard formatted track with 10 sectors (many of the new formatting programs use 10 sectors/track), numbered 1-A. Track 4F is definitely a protected track, sporting 12 sectors, a crc (damaged sector) error, an shr (overwritten header) sector, and on top of all that, the sector number are all jumbled! Track 50 is simply an unformatted track.

After analyzing the disk (make sure that you analyze all 82 tracks), look for anything unusual, like track 4F above. Generally, protected tracks appear at track 4F. If the protected track is at 4F, then the conversion is easy. Convert the disk as follows:

1) Format a disk double sided (using either 9 or 10 sectors/track).

2) Copy all of the files from the original disk to the new double sided disk.

3) Now comes the tricky part -- copy the protected track from the original disk to the double sided disk. Use the arrow keys to set both the begin and end tracks to the number of the protected track. If it's 4F, that number will be 80. The analyzer runs from track 0 to 51 hex, or 0 to 81 decimal. The copy program does not start at 0, but rather at 1 and is in decimal. After copying track 80 (normally you should also copy tracks 81 and 82 also) from the original to the double sided disk, use analyze on the new track(s) to verify that they are exactly like the original. If it is, then you should now have a copy of your original disk on a double sided disk (with a whole lot of room left over) and best of all, it should run!!

That was the easy situation, because the protected track was at the end of the disk, and we didn't have to worry about it. What if the track is at track 2, though? Now we have to contend with a bad track in the middle of our data. Since it's bad, we don't ever want to write there (or we might see those cute little bombs), so how do we insure that we won't?

OK, take a deep breath, and here we go... Every sector holds 512 bytes. So if we formatted the disk at 10 sectors/track we get 512 bytes * 10 sectors * 2 sides = 10K/track. Thus (allowing a little for the FAT table) if the protected track is 02, we should run into it about 17K into the disk. We simply write a small file (or files) to the disk insuring that we use enough files to cover the entire track 02, then copy the protected track over these files, then rename these files (which we've just damaged by copying a damaged track onto them) to something obvious like BAD1.XXX, BAD2.XXX, etc. If you're not sure which files are damaged, try copying the files to another disk. GEM will tell you which ones are damaged.

Now we have a double sided disk with one or two files called BAD.XXX. All we have to do is copy all of the files off of the original to the double sided disk, and voila, we should have a working copy. If you want to get elegant, use a disk utility like Michtron Utilities to change the attributes of the damaged files to HIDDEN, and they won't even show up on the GEM desktop!

That's all there is to it. Procopy will even copy your new creation if you use doubled sided protected copy mode. I used this method to fit all three of King's Quest III's disk onto one extended format disk.

NOTE: Use the new twister format program in STart and your resulting disk will load twice as fast as the original.

Well, there's another month shot down the tubes!! See you all next month.

Computer Music

MIDITALK

By Mitch Wells (C.H.A.O.S.)

Well, it's been at least 3 issues since my last installment, but sometimes life is like that. Much has happened in the world of the Atari ST and MIDI since we last chatted, and I'd like to share some of it with you.

To begin with, not much is happening on the 8-bit front. Hybrid Arts has come out with a new step-time note sequencer to work as a companion to Miditrack III which sells for about $60.00. From what I understand the sequencer is like a high-level language that is programmed in much the same way as you would program in BASIC but with NOTE commands and such. I Haven't seen it yet, but a friend of mine has ordered it and I'll let you know if it turns out to be anything. Also, Hybrid Arts has discounted the 8-bit software and interface BIG TIME, so if you were thinking about MIDI for your XE, come on into the store (Elderly Instruments in downtown Lansing) and talk to me... I'll see what I can do for you.

Now for ST stuff... Remember I told you that the Steinberg PRO-24 sequencer which sold for $295 couldn't be worth the money or something like that... Man, what a lie that was. On a whim, I ordered the program and it has totaly changed my life. My clothes are clean now, I have french toast every morning, I drive a BMW and Man O' Man, can I make music with it. (Most of that was a lie too, I mean, can you see me eating french toast!!) Ok... Steinberg PRO-24 is basically a sequencer with unlimited sequences, a MIDI recorder with 80,000+ note memory, a patch librarian for your Casio CZ-101 and DX/TX7 and easy to use. I hope to demonstrate it sometime soon (read: late spring general meeting) and I'll dare to show you what it can do. If you can't wait, just call me at the store and I'll set up a time that you can see mine run.

There are soooo many companies jumping on the ST/MIDI bandwagon, it's crazy! There's DR. T's Software (Remember my article about KCS ST - a great program albeit cumbersome and with poor documentation), Hybrid Arts has released a full MIDI/SMPTE audio/video editing system based on 2 ST's, their ADAP sampling rack (a device, which when connected to an ST, will digitize sound to a very high fidelity and play it back when triggered via MIDI), SMPTETRACK ST (their sequencing software), SMPTE interface (SMPTE is a communication protocol for syncing video equipment to film and audio equipment and visa versa) and your choice of video playback/editor and MIDI keyboard... Quite a system. Sonus (who makes about the best Commodore MIDI software in my opinion) has released the Masterpiece ST software package... It runs about $500 (whew!) but claims to do everything the Steinberg PRO-24 does. Beam Team has released a number of patch librarians and will have a full-featured sequencer out by summer. Okay, you don't remember... Patches are different sound settings for synthesizers and a patch librarian stores the sound datd to disk and transmits this data to the synthesizer through MIDI. And, if I can ever get together with John Baker or Brian Goluska (which I hope to do soon [read: no car]) there will be a demo of MIDISOFT's Metatrack ST sequencer in the club library... This software, I also mentioned before, but was unable to get much info on it... Well now, here's the demo that they sent to me... It is a fully-functioning version of their sequencer except that it is limited to 100 notes... Just check it out. Note: This software demo IS copyrighted and cannot be copied -- Still I'm sure that there will be a provision for club members to borrow the original to check it out. Passport (one of the earlier MIDI software companies) has promised ST software, on it goes. And finally, Hybrid Arts has released EZ-Score ST which will turn your EZ-Track ST files into musical scores and print them out... Mark Smathers tells me that there are a number of EZ-Track files available for downloading on the various data services like Comp-U-Serve.

Next time, I will start a series of articles (which will probably come out as regularly as my past efforts) about MIDI -- mainly, what a sequencer is, what a patch librarian is, etc., to give all you fellow ATARI users an idea of what you can do with all this stuff...

(Ed. Note - Although MULE is a very old game for the 8-Bit Atari Series Computer, it remains a favorite due to the multi-player and stratagy play. Here is a mini review by someone who has just discovered the fun of MULE.)

A Review of M.U.L.E.
By David W. Altoft (G.K.A.U.G.)

I have tried the game of M.U.L.E. and I liked it very much. It is loads of fun and it is not hard to learn. First you have the beginners screen. To practice on and learn how to play it.

Then when you are ready, you can move on to the standard game where you go 12 months against either other players, up to 4 players, or against the computer. You try to beat your opponents, and become the First Founder. Then when you are good enough, you can go on to the tournament game for more action.

On all the games you can run the demo program to see how the games are played. This allows you to get an idea of how to play.

Now to tell you what's in each game:

Beginner: You start with six months on the planet and after you get your land you put a M.U.L.E. on it. You work your land for: food on flat land or near the river, energy on flat land, and Smithore on or near the mountain areas. But watch out for the pirate ships, they steal Smithore.

Standard: You play it like the beginners game, but you have the added fun of trying to survive 12 months. You can also try to buy more land to increase your production of products.

Tournament: You get to survey your property for Crystite, get a M.U.L.E. to mine Crystite on flat land. Then the pirates will take the Crystite instead of Smithore since the crystalite is worth a lot of money.

(GKAUG is sponsoring MULE Tournaments at its next meetings.)

Telecom Review

BBS/ST FROM QMI
Reviewed by Bill Rayl (W.A.U.G.)

About three months ago, I ordered BB/ST from QMI. At that time, QMI was working to fix a few bugs in the program and didn't wish to release the Bulletin Board System until those bugs were fixed. I like that in a company--much better than "patch it now and make 'em pay for a fixed version in a month or so." Just last week, I received the program, and it was definitely worth the wait!

From a Sysop's point of view, BB/ST is a dream come true. The Sysop functions are all contained in a number of menus and sub-menus you can become familiar with in a matter of minutes. At the main Sysop menu, a few of the things you can do are: call out from the BBS to another system; fake a BB/ST command without logging on (helpful in testing out customized commands--more on this later); read notes to the Sysop; perform a number of Disk functions; and access the system editors.

The system editors are used to modify parts of the BBS. There is a separate editor for menus, BBS configuration, user information, and downloads. Menus in BB/ST are completely customizable. The Sysop can determine what characters correspond to what commands, and can even create commands by chaining existing commands or writing "mini-language" programs. In these mini-language programs, you can execute external programs, set up character and numeric variables, do arithmetic computations, create loop structures, and run other mini-language programs. This is a neat feature that will allow BB/ST owners to really personalize their systems.

In the configuration editor, you have over 90 different items that can be set to accomodate your needs. You can set defaults for system file names and locations, access levels (from zero to 32767), and various other user and system defaults.

I could go on for pages and pages about the sysop functions alone, but there's a lot more to this BBS. For instance, the message base is unusual in a couple of respects. First of all, it is a tree structure. Learning to get around the tree will take a little time for the unsuspecting BBS user used to linear message bases, but the time taken is well spent. The tree structure is easy to get around, is faster, and (a big plus for us one drive owners) takes up little space on a disk. I have over 100 messages on the system now and all the message files take up less than 30K. For those who just can't get the hang of traversing the tree, BB/ST can also allow for linear-type reading.

The second unusual feature is the ability to "attach" a file to a message. When this is done, a person can read a message concerning a file and, if the file sounds interesting, it can be downloaded right then and there, without ever leaving the message base!

File transfers can be made using Xmodem, Xmodem/CRC, Ascii, or batch Ymodem protocols. Files can be listed (and downloaded) by file number or name. Listings can also be done by date or since last on (new files).

The BBS also has an online polling facility allowing any user to create a set of questions that others can answer. Percentages are calculated from the responses which can be viewed by users at large.

One other nice feature is the ability to use VIDTEX pictures, viewable by callers using Flash! (from Antic) or the soon to be released ST Professional (from QMI). The BBS comes with a small public domain program which allows you to convert Degas pictures to VIDTEX format.

Now that I've heaped tons of praise on this BBS, I think I should mention a few features not in this version. First, here are the things QMI says will be in version 1.1: time/credit accounting for each user (as things are, users can't be credited for the time they take to upload); background Sysop while a user is on-line (currently the user cannot perform any function while the Sysop is fiddling with things); 16 color VIDTEX graphics; and multi-line/multi-user capability! QMI says they will offer upgrades to registered owners for $5, which is, in my opinion, very reasonable.

At this time, there are only a couple things I would like to see incorporated in a future version of this software. The first thing is a few more commands in the mini-language (such as the ability to read in lines or characters from a text file). But, since you can run external programs, this isn't really necessary.

The second thing would be the ability to "lock out" certain undesirable (i.e. obnoxious) people from logging on. Unless the person habitually changed their login name, this could be easily accomplished by creating a file containing the names of said undesirables, which would be scanned at each newuser login. It can get real tedious deleting a person twice a day (though I haven't had this problem yet, I have heard horror stories from other Sysops).

Overall, this is an impressive piece of software. Now, there's only one problem ... where am I going to get the money for a hard drive?!

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ST Review

ST FORTH/MT by Data Becker and ABACUS
Reviewed for MAM by: Peter K. Enberg

ST FORTH/MT is a powerful new version of the Forth programming language for the Atari ST. In this article I will attempt to point out both its strengths and weaknesses. Since most readers are unlikely to be familiar with Forth itself, I will also try to explain a little about Forth as we go. If this article generates any interest I will write some more articles about Forth and the various versions of it.

Upon opening up the directory, the first thing one notices is that most of the disk seems empty. This is the first indication that ST FORTH/MT is a traditional Forth, unlike either of the other Forths I have examined for the ST.

Traditionally, Forths have their own way of dealing with disk space: the disk operating system is ignored except for sector I/O since the disk is considered to be made up of consecutive numbered 1 k blocks or "screens". This makes Forths independent of DOS's and considerably speeds up disk I/O; however, this puts the responsibility upon the programmer to keep track of his usage.

The next thing one notices after opening the special startup file and passing the title screen is that ST FORTH/MT comes up on a screen blank except for a cursor. Again, ST FORTH/MT is a traditional Forth with a command line interpreter rather than drop-down menus etc. In fact, ST FORTH/MT, although including words to access all the low-level ST routines including GEMDOS, has no way to access AES or VDI.

Okay, so let's try something. We type 5 6 + . <CR> and ST FORTH/MT responds by taking 5 and 6, adding them, then displaying 11 Integer Ok. Yes, ST FORTH/MT is alive and interactive!

Next let's try a little programming. In Forth this means adding to the dictionary. The dictionary is a linked list in which each entry has a name it can be called by, a pointer to a generic routine for the type of that entry, and a parameter field containing the data for the entry. In the case of a machine language routine, the data is the routine itself and the pointer points directly to the data. When you type a word, Forth simply looks for it in the dictionary and does it.

Everything is here: variables, constants, strings, arrays, machine language routines, and high level Forth routines. This is what is contained in the .dat file that you load on startup.

Suppose we want a routine that adds 6 to a number we type in and displays the result. We'll call it ADDSIX and define it like this:

: ADDSIX 6 + . ; <CR>

Now when we type 5 ADDSIX <CR> we get 11 Integer Ok. If we type 578 ADDSIX <CR> we get 584 Integer Ok. What fun!

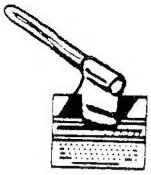
We can go on this way for a while, trying out various commands as explained in the manual and in it's excellent glossary of the hundreds of words in the initial dictionary. However, what if we want to save the definitions we have created? One way is to save our expanded dictionary to the disk. This, however, is a complicated procedure (fortunately described in Chapter 10 of the manual) and not usually done. The more common way is to create the definitions in text form on the disk using the editor, and then loading them into the dictionary when they are needed.

The editor ("EDDY"), is itself in this form, and can be activated by typing "100 LOAD" and then watching while the 38 blocks of text are digested. Type EDDY <CR> and you're on your way. This assumes you have a monochrome monitor. If you don't, you're in trouble!!!

My biggest complaint about ST FORTH/MT is that the only description of the editor commands one gets is the help menu that appears at the bottom of the screen in tiny hi-rez characters. The editor doesn't work in color if this menu is present. Although the manual does explain in Chapter 10 how to deactivate the help menu, you have to have access to a mono system to do it. Then unless you were smart enough to write down or ALT-HELP the menu beforehand, you now have a working editor with no way to tell how to use it. I sincerely hope ABACUS does something about this in their earliest update.

Once into the disk blocks, one finds several other useful utilities. There is an assembler for adding machine language routines; a decompiler and a disassembler for digging into the dictionary to see what makes it tick, and a complete floating point package which once loaded, can be activated or deactivated by simply typing FP or INT.

To summarize, ST FORTH/MT, looked at from the point of view of an experienced, traditional Forth programmer is a rich, fast, straight-forward implementation of Forth. A person experienced with GEM, however, will probably be frustrated at its inability to write GEM applications; and a novice to Forth will probably need to acquire several good books on Forth to make any sense of it. Although for under $50, it is worth getting if one is at all interested. One can only hope that perhaps ABACUS will release a companion tutorial volume; it would then make an excellent beginning Forth.



Last Hacks

Laid back with (a) Fifth
By: John Unger Zussman

Originally published in Info World on Oct. 4, 1982 and has been widely reprinted since then.

BASIC, FORTRAN, COBOL... These programming languages are well known and more or less well-loved throughtout the computer industry. However, there are numerous other languages which are less well known, yet still have ardent devotees. In fact, these little-known languages generally have the most fanatic admirers. For those who wish to know more about these obscure languages, and why they are obscure, I present the following catalog:

SIMPLE... is an acronym for "Sheer Idiot's Monopurpose Programming Linguistic Environment." This language, developed at Hanover's College for Technical Misfits, was designed to make it impossible to write code with any errors in it. The commands of this language are therefore confined to BEGIN, END and STOP. Furthermore, no matter how the commands are arranged, it is impossible to receive a syntax error.

Programs written in SIMPLE do nothing useful. Thus, they achieve results similar to programs written in other languages without the tedious frustrating process of testing and debugging.

SLOBOL... is best known for its tremendously slow compiler. While many compilers allow you to take a coffee break while they compile, SLOBOL allows you to travel to Bolivia to pick up the coffee. Forty-three programmers are known to have died of boredom while sitting at their console and waiting for a SLOBOL program to be compiled. Weary SLOBOL programmers often turn to a related (but infinitely faster) language, COCAINE.

VALGOL... was developed in Southern California's San Fernando Valley in hope of educating Valley girls in programming.

VALGOL commands include REALLY, LIKE, WELL, TUBULAR, GROSS ME OUT and Y'KNOW. Variables are assigned with the =LIKE and =TOTALLY operators. Other operators include the "Californian Booleans" FERSURE and NOWAY. Repetitions of code are handled in FOR-SURE loops. Here is a sample VALGOL program:

```
14      LIKE, Y¥KNOW (I MEAN) START
%%      IF
PI      A =LIKE BITCHEN AND
OI      B =LIKE TUBULAR AND
 9      C =LIKE GRODY**MAX
4K      (FERSURE)**2
18      THEN
4I      FOR I =LIKE 1 TO OH MAYBE      100
86       DO WAH + (DITTY**2)
 9       BARF(I) =TOTALLY GROSS(OUT)
-17     SURE
IF      LIKE BAG THIS PROGRAM
 ?      REALLY
$$      LIKE TOTALLY (Y¥KNOW)
```

VALGOL is somewhat declaimed by its users for its unfriendly error messages. For example, when the user makes a syntax error, it replies with the message "GAG ME WITH A SPOON."

LAIDBACK... was developed at the (now defunct) Marin County Center for T'ai Chi, Mellowness and Computer Programming.

This center was ideal for programmers who liked to soak in hot tubs while they worked. However, and unfortuantely, few programmers could survive there long, since the outlawed Coca Cola and pizza in favor of bean curd and Perrier.

Many mourn the demise of LAIDBACK because of its reputation as a gentle and non-threatening language. For example, LAIDBACK responded to user syntax errors with the message, "SORRY MAN, I CAN'T DEAL WITH THAT."

C- ... was named for the grade its creator received when he submitted it to his professor in Graduate-Programming Class. C- is best described as a low-level programming language. In fact, the language generally requires more C- statements than machine code statements to execute a given task. In this respect, it is very similar to COBOL.

FIFTH... is a precision mathematical language in which data types refer to quantities. The data types range from CC, OUNCE, SHOT and JIGGER to FIFTH (hence the name of the language,) LITER, MAGNUM, and GROTTO. Commands refer to ingredients, such as CHABLIS, CHARDONNAY, CABERNET, GIN, VERMOUTH, VODKA, SCOTCH and WHATEVERSAROUND.

There are many versions of FIFTH, each of which reflects the sophistication and financial status of its users. Commands in the ELITE dialect include VSOP and LAFIATTE, while commands in the GUTTER dialect include HOOTCH and RIPPLE. The latter dialect is a favorite of frustrated FORTH programmers.

LITHP ... is unremarkable, save for the absence of the letter S in its character set, yet is said to be useful in processing lithtth.

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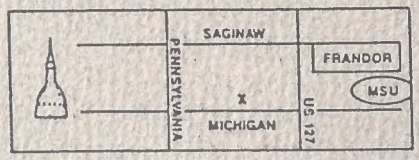

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Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

ATARI CORP has a new Vice President. Former TEXAS INSTRUMENTS and IBM exec JERRY BROWN (not the one Linda Ronstadt was seeing...) is the new VP and GEneral Manager of U.S. Operations.

ATARI STOCKWATCH: After holding near the $27 high for nearly three months, ATARI stock has in the last weeks been drifting steadily down, to about $22 at this writing. Continued announced products without actual availability has weakened confidence in the company stock.

The Commodore-Atari lawsuits have finally been settled, although no details are available at this writing as to who pays who what. It is expected that Commodore will pay Atari SOMEthing as a result of the three-year old lawsuit that charged Commodore with patent infringemants. Atari had an exclusive development contract with a small firm for support and graphics chips... and then the firm was bought by Commodore, who promptly told ATARI where it could go for chips. The name of the little fim? AMIGA, Inc. ATARI sued Commodore both for breach of contract and for putting ATARI developed chips in the AMIGA computer... when ATARI couldn't even get them.

In what MAY or MAY NOT be a related event, Commodore subsequently fired their president and management staff, according to the April 23 WALL STREET JOURNAL. The ousted officials are suing for NINE MILLION dollars. Ouch!

We were pleased to find that the rumored problems with the CHICAGO ATARIFEST were just rumors. As the FEST is to be held at the O'HARE RAMADA INN, outside the city limits of Chicago, union costs are not and never were an issue. Make plans to be there JULY 25-26! More details in the next months.

"COMPUTER INQUIRY III" at the FCC reached a ruling... and decided to leave well enough alone, at least for now. Many thought that new regulations would be passed that would pave the road to much higher computer-access rates, adding as much as $8 an hour to all telecommunication services like Compuserve and PC PURSUIT. The decision is based on a finding that the BELL OPERATING COMPANIES hold too many cards already in the telecom feild, and to allow them to go into new ventures in cometition with the data networks would likely force them out of business, leaving only the BELLs to set service and rates.

8-BIT PRICES RISE. It may be due to Reagans latest flap with tariffs, or just a decision out in California, but dealers have been notified of a healthy 10-15% price hike in 8-bit ATARI hardware. Any time now, the XE may pass the ST as the "expensive" model in the ATARI lineup.

Last month we reported that Canadian BATTERIES INCLUDED was bought out by ELECTRONIC ARTS. Since then, rumors surfaced that EA found that they were not financially solid enough to complete the deal and that they might fold their own tent soon. No reasonable evidence for this rumor has turned up, and it is doubtful that the deal is in trouble. EA says call THEIR customer service lines from now on for support of BI products at (415) 578-0316.

BRITISH UNAXIAL LASERS has developed a CD based optical disk drive for the ST, to be sold at about 200 pounds (something like $400) when released later this year. Sorry, thats all the info I have on this one.

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M.A.M. this Month

Editor: Richard Barnes (517) 349-0513

Inside MAM: THE CLUBS- PAGE

C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
G.A.G. (FLINT)	9
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	11
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	13
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	15
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	16
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	17

FEATURES:

MIO MADNESS - Info	7
LETTER TO THE DEALERS	18
ZOOMRACKS II - Review	18
JOYSTICK MENU CONTROL - Program	21
COMPUTER MATHEMATICS - Article	21
ST CONTROL CHARACTERS - Info	22
MT-C SHELL - Review	23
VTOC for 8-bit ATARIs - Info	24
8-bit Disk Structure - Chart	25
WHAT'S IN A LANGUAGE - Article .	26
FORTH STAGE - Learning guide	28
TURBO BASIC - Review	29
XL/XE BACKUP POWER SUPPLY - Plans	31
PRICE FIXING in M.U.L.E. - Hints	32
ANTIC AT HANOVER, GERMANY -	33
BOOT ORDER ON THE ST - Tech Info	35
ST MEMORY UPGRADES - Review	36
LAST HACKS - A ZIX in the hand...	38

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE is an independent newsletter published by the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society and is not affiliated in any way with Atari Corporation. Atari, the Fuji symbol and the names of various Atari computer equipment are trademarks of Atari Corporation.

This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

PUBLISHERS NOTES

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE is alive and well after last month's financial restructuring. As we anticpated, it was not without some casualty.

We are sorry to see C.A.C.E., the club from JACKSON, leave our publication. They plan to produce their own newsletter again, with their President, Harold Larue, as the editor. We wish them luck and hope for their continued co-operation in events and matters of common interest to Michigan ATARI owners.

W.A.U.G. (Ann Arbor) has decided to also put out a monthly letter of their own for their members but to remain in our magazine as well. W.A.U.G. members will have the option of getting M.A.M. at a reduced extra charge through their club, rather than to raise their $5.00 dues to cover it.

The remaining six clubs have renewed their commitment to quality and full involvement in MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. With the present arrangements, and growing national attention, our circulation continues to grow despite the few losses at W.A.U.G. and C.A.C.E.

Look forward to MORE pages of FEATURE material than ever before in MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE...

* * *

Some members of M.A.C.E. (Detroit's original ATARI club) took offense to my reporting of their club's decision to start charging GUESTS that want to visit their meetings. Gee, I and everyone I mentioned the charge to took offense too, thats why it was NEWS, and why I reported it. It was information right out of the MACE JOURNAL, neither gossip nor opinion, as a hostile letter from M.A.C.E. Secretary MIKE OLIN suggested.

In essence, the letter points out that M.A.C.E. perceived that people could buy the MACE JOURNAL, one issue at a time, for less money than a membership in M.A.C.E... and if they came to the meetings too, would have most of the benefits of membership at less cost than a full supporting membership. Rather than change the newsletter price structure or taking other action to add incentive to regular membership, M.A.C.E. chose to disincentive mere visitation with a $2.00 charge.

M.A.C.E., according to the letter, has the right to make their own rules. True enough, and we have the right to report them. I have received dozens of comments from all over the country about this item since we reported it last month, and everyone had the same reaction- amazement. I would like to know that I am

welcome to drop in to other ATARI club meetings when my travels take me to other cities, as would many of you. Paying to enter, due to internal difficulites in rallying membership, is not an attraction to this sort of cross-country computing. To me, it seems a lot more like drilling a hole in the sinking boat to let the water run out. THAT was an OPINION. As for my statement last month that "you may not be as welcome at some other club meetings as you might guess", I defend it as part and parcel with the NEWS, not gossip.

Declining membership is a fact of life for many clubs. Adapting to the needs and expenses of keeping the club together is the resposibility of the club organization. M.A.C.E. simply made a decision to deal with it in a way that surprises and somewhat upsets many of us outsiders. I'm sorry if reporting those decisions is upsetting to the insiders.

I DO wish to state that perhaps I should have made it more clear that ANYONE will be made ENTIRELY welcome at M.A.C.E. meetings... for a FEE.

OK, that's a cheap shot, and I really DO want to promote good relations between ATARI clubs, but I felt really goaded to it by the curiously pushy and overly defensive attitude of Mike's letter. It purports to speak for M.A.C.E., although signed by only one M.A.C.E. officer, the Recording Secretary. Two members of W.A.U.G. (one of our M.A.M. member groups) have their names typed in with no signatures, and the letter apparently was circulated at a W.A.U.G. meeting before being sent to me. No phone numbers or addresses are in the letter, and Mike's phone is not listed in Plymouth (the return address on the envelope). It arrived the day after our deadline, and demanded immediate full reprint and retraction of something that I stongly feel needs no apology. Worst was an offensive postscript that attempted to equate a failure to print the letter verbatim with a lack of professionalism and integrity on my part.

Though I won't waste more room here printing the three page tirade, I trust that Mike, et al, will agree that I have fairly conveyed the general content of the letter. Mike also wrote that our readers should be "informed that, M.A.C.E. had its decline in membership well under way before the 'internal political disaster' occurred" that resulted in a separate new Detroit area club (MAGIC). So be it, though it seems an odd thing to want to publicise.

M.A.C.E. can make any rules they like, but I hope that they (and other clubs that find themselves in difficulty) will give some pause to consider how their actions appear from the outside. Out-of-town visitors and sampling by potential members are healthy for a club, not a drain on it. An organization should have enough obvious benefits to membership that financial strong-arming isn't needed. THAT is my OPINION.

If the direct costs, of the meeting facility for example, were promoted as the reason for the charge, there would be better reaction to it. But the announcement in the MACE JOURNAL said flatly that "only paid members should be able to attend future meetings". The charge is to keep outsiders out, and insiders in.

It's not done that way most places. And THAT, my friend, makes it NEWS.

* * *

While a few companies like ICD CORP (MIO, SPARTADOS, U.S. DOUBLER, etc.) continue to brighten the 8-bit future with innovative and reasonably priced products, the rest of the world seems to be only looking at the ST. On a PUBLISHER'S conference on COMPUSERVE last month, attended by all the major ATARI magazines (us too!), the theme seemed to be R.I.P. ATARI-8. It seems that even though most of the publications are very pro-8-bit, there are just too few advertisers that want to push 8-bit software. One after another of the magazine editors pointed out that they are forced to write about the ST because that's what their advertisers are selling. Even when good 8-bit articles are availble, they have to wait for room between the ST items that bring in the ads. This artificially reduces the apparent interest and viability of the 8-bit line, which then goes on to create our fading reality.

Don't take me to be ANTI-ST. I think it is a terriffic machine, and like the MAC and AMIGA, it represents where computing is going. I would not even recommend an 8-bit machine to ANYONE who had no computer and was buying one NOW. The price difference between the 8-bit and the vastly more capable 16-bit computers is simply too close now. However, too many of our 8-bit users are prematurely closing the book on the 8-bit that is currently on their desk, promted by the continuing reports of the death of 8-bit support.

Now, more than ever, the typical 8-bit ATARI owner thinks of himself as an ST owner that just hasn't got his yet. Although this is totally unneccessary for MANY of the 8-bit owners in light of their applications and uses, it has become a totem-like ritual belief... and THAT is as dangerous to the future of 8-bit support as anything else. DON'T BUY INTO FAKE OBSOLESENCE: Use your 8-bit until it actually won't do what you need! You will be surprised how long that may actually take.

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Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep.	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Scott Evans	353-7645
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2381
ST Publ. Librarian	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
Newsletter Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

President's Corner
by Leo Sell

Well, with the warm spring weather, this deadline has really snuck up on me. Since I bought this new house I don't have much time to devote strictly to the computer.

Hopefully, several of us will be going to the upcoming spring CES at the end of this month. Should be interesting to see what kind of promises Jack and company make this time. Much of CES will be quite positive though. It is an excellent opportunity to see what's coming to market in the overall consumer electronics field. We will see everything from the latest in electronic watches to the newest wall size televisions. You will certainly see reports next issue.

C.H.A.O.S. meetings of late have been real good. Both the 8-bit SIG and the 16-bit SIG have been showing new and exciting products. If you aren't attending you are missing a lot. As always, we need some help here and there. Here

is a list for you to choose from. Call me and volunteer soon:

Publicity Manager
Advertising Manager
Publications Librarian
Newsletter Editor
Assistant Disk Librarians

There are lots of members out there that are capable of helping in these areas. We hope to here from you.

I would also like to encourage you to let us know how we can better serve the membership. Of course, with suggestions you should also offer assistance. How about your opinion on the state of Atari computing. We'd like to hear more from you. C.H.A.O.S. is your Atari resource. Help make it work.

Meeting Minutes-8

Secretary / Treasurer's Report

April's CHAOS meeting had some tough competition due to the excellent spring weather, but those 40-50 who attended were treated to a show well worth seeing.

Scott Evans demonstrated some of the commercial and public domain products that have recently been introduced for the ST line and things look good for the future of that line.

John Nagy showed some printer utilities and as we've all come to expect another good Disk of the Month. (He should throw in a lousy one just so we don't take him for granted. Just kidding John).

Leo again discussed the need for volunteers to fill some critical jobs for the club such as publicity and advertising. We have an excellent core group of workers but more are needed. John talked about the publishers conference on Compuserve and how the Atari magazines people say they have to carry ST material to attract advertising which makes the mags possible. Unless people prove to the advertisers that the 8-bit market still is a good source of money then support from the magazines and manufacturers will drop more.

Guy Hurt brought in a new piece of software he found and it was raffled off to Charles Bailey. Congratulations Chuck.

The treasury balance is $767.10.

That's it for April.
Gary R. Ferris
Sec/Treas.

Meeting Minutes-ST

APRIL ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions. The April ST meeting had 25 people attend (and this time I didn't have to count the janitor to get over 20). We've settled on a 2 ST standard hardware configuration, with 1 ST for library work and 1 for demonstration. The demo machine will have a monitor as well as being piped into the overhead video system, to allow the person doing the demo to talk without craning their head upward.

Steven Brooks has volunteered to be the ST "finance person", to coordinate membership and money handling with the Chaos treasurer, and Dan Van Epps has offered to help with disk library work during the meetings. This means we are effectively spreading the ST group's work and becoming more effective at meetings. At the start of the meeting, we had free discussion. Topics included the rumored 8-bit emulator, equipment prices (ST prices approaching 8-bit prices when buying a system, monitor, disk), and modems. Retail software was then demo'd: 10th Frame, a bowling program from Access Software. Wrestling, from Epyx, Arcticfox (Electronic Arts, ported from the Amiga), and Balance of Power, written by the legendary Chris Crawford.

Then some new library software was demo'd, including the ST group's first "Disk of the Month". This month the DOM has 3 fine games. Maybe we'll be able to continue with a DOM, or maybe we'll have a DONAT (Disk of Now and Then), we'll see how the progress of public domain software develops.

We also saw "Shiny Bubbles" from Xanth. Does it look like a real reflection? Can you mentally trace the rays?

Correction from last month: The article ended and suddenly had 2 more paragraphs. This was a computer error caused by an in-valid human keying new material over an old article, and leaving a couple of old paragraphs behind. Should have got a "TOO MANY KEYSTROKES - NOT ENOUGH THINKING" error.

See the ST publications library at the ST meeting next month.

Telecom

The CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by John Nagy, SysOp
(517) 371-1106

Not a lot to report this month, just more and more files going online as we try to get a "DISK FULL" message from the new 10 MEG hard drive.

System (and Club) Librarian JOHN BAKER has been busy cataloging and indexing a great selection of "standard" files for both the 8-bit line and the ST series. These are files that will be available indefinitely, supplemented with a few hundred "current" files. The index/file descriptions read like an all-star roster.

You will find that our BBS is pehaps the friendliest available, with online help automatically popping up when you seem to need it and dissapearing again once you are back on-course. Don't be afraid to flop around like a fish on deck, you can't hurt anything, and learning by error is the fastest way possible. And nobody is looking (usually)!

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

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Industry Report

ICD and the MIO MADNESS
Update by John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)

DATAPERFECT from LJK won't work with ICD's MIO interface box... unless you send it in for an update. For $30 LJK will exchange you a new version of the fine database program. The sum and total of the update is that it no longer requires a translator disk to use the print option. No additional work has been done to make use of enhanced memory. The problem with the MIO is that access to the EXPANSION BUSS disappears when the translater is run, cutting the MIO and its printer interface out of your system. A lot to pay for a little item, it is nonetheless available from LJK Enterprises, 1351 Yves, Manchester, Missouri 63011.

MIO bugs also keep it from working with SYNFILE, the only other reasonable database pacMage for the 8-bit ATARI. It, too, won't print, but for different reasons. ICD's TOM HARKER assured me tht this bug was fixed and would be included in a replacement rom kit for all MIO owners. Other bugs being worked on include BUFFER problems (losing the pointer, or locking up), and RS-232 emulation. Expect this update to be available soon. Tom says that they still can't keep production up with the demand for this terriffic external ramdisk/ printer interface/ modem interface/ hard drive interface unit. By the way, despite what you may have read elsewhere, you CAN use ANY DOS with the MIO, SPARTADOS by ICD is NOT required. It just works best with it.

ICD is also launching a new line of hard drives for the 8-bit AND the ST, their first venture into the 16-bit market. To be competitively priced at about $650 for a 20 meg, it should include an internal CLOCK and ports to control additional "bare" hard drives. There will be one unit for use with the MIO (and also MACINTOSH!!), and another styled to sit slimly under the ST monitor with room inside for two hard drives. Additionally, ICD will shortly ship FASTBACK for the 8-bit ATARI, a very fast, menu driven backup system for any size hard drive. It will maximize floppy storage and can back up files that are bigger that a single floppy. It will also be able to make use of an "archive bit" which will be set by the new SPARTADOS-X DOS-on-a-cart, due out this summer. This will allow you to run FLASHBACK and only files written or updated since the last backup will be copied, substantially reducing time and effort. Tom Harker also mentioned a new SPARTADOS TOOLS disk for the 8-bit line, including many hard drive and crash recovery utilities, plus lots of other items like reassignalble console function keys, etc. This one might be out in time for the CES show in Chicago in June. Watch for a review!

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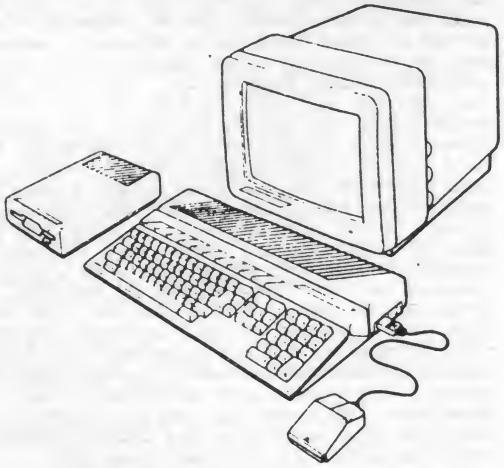

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May 13 6:30pm Neithercut
May 23 10am National Computer Clinic (Burton)
June 10 6:30pm Neithercut
June 27 10am National Computer Clinic

Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint,Mi. Contact:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Presidential Address

Presidential Mumblings for May
by Jim Steele

Looks like another Michigan winter is history. Perhaps the great spring weather was responsible for the light turnout at the April meeting. Our notion of small discussion groups didn't work out once again, maybe next time, eh?

We did discuss the new newsletter rates. The consensus was to stay with it for now. The major gripe is the lack of feature material in among the local news. I've tried to keep it brief on these pages to make room for more articles. Of course, the fact that I don't have to write as much is incidental...

The proposal was also made that we at GAG bankroll an extra sheet (4 pages) from time to time. I'll have to check this out with the Lansing crew. Along the same lines was the topic of dues. (I'm glad I didn't bring it up!) Our dues are the lowest going. They just cover the newsletter, and then only if we cut people off when their dues run out. Looks like we're going to have to raise them to $12/yr starting in August.

A future in Politics?... Even though it's only May, it's not to early to consider running for office. I know I've been in here for far too long. I mention this now so that you'll have plenty of time to think about it.

See you at the May meeting, -Jim

F.A.C.T.S. BBS 313 736-3920
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Disk Library

Disk Offerings for May
by Jerry Cross

Disk #190 contains an update to the Amodem terminal program. Version 7.4 now features just about every features you can think of, including support for the R-Time cartridge, Basic XE support for a HUGE buffer, and now features Y-Modem downloading protocol.

Disk #191 contains a load of math tutorials written by GAG member Clinton Pierce. These programs are written in Turbo-Basic, so you will need an XL/XE computer to run them.

Disk #192 and #193 are more AMS music files compiled by Jim Tuma.

Disk #194 is loaded with utilities. BudgetDB is a checkbook budgeting program, Superkey is a great key-macro program written by Keith Ledbetter, and ARC is an improved, but slow, disk compacting program. This system is now becoming the standard on both CompuServe, and GENIE.

Disk #195 is loaded with games. Featured is EUCHRE (pronouce You-ker). This is a bridge type card game. The computer will play both your partner and both opponents.

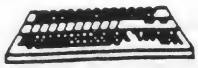
Disk #196 is a graphics disk. There are two koala picture dumps that allow you to dump pictures in any size, and even make greating

cards. Rapid Graphics Converter is a picture format changer that lets you change from Koala to other types of formats.

Disk #197 is a great program that turns your dot-matrix printer into a high-quality printer. DAISY-DOT comes with 5 fonts, an easy to use font editor, and lots of documentation. There are too many features to print in this letter. Check it out!

That's all for this month, see you at the next meeting.

-Jerry



ST News

ST NEWS FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

I will be adding another 5 or 6 disks to the library in May so start saving your pennies now. In May there will be a heavy emphasis on games with at least 4 disks devoted to them.

For adventure/fantasy role playing addicts look for 3 Eamon adventures. This gaming system is being converted from Apple & IBM to the ST in GFA Basic largely by Michael Detlefsen. The Master Dungeon Disk & Beginners Cave has been in the GAG library since March on Disk #44. The three new adventures are all on one disk in one of two formats.

One disk contains the compiled programs that do not need GFA Basic or the runtime module.. Another disk contains the GFA Basic source code as well as the Eamon Designer files. These files enable you to create your own adventures. Docs are included. The only thing you need is GFA Basic.

The way Detlefsen has currently set up the Eamon files, you will have to transfer the adventures to a separate disk or run them from the root directory. The code for the programs is rather primitive (spaghetti) and I'm sure could be vastly improved (structured) to make the listings much more readable. I spent a couple of weeks off and on working on the Eamon master program and have finally split the entire program into more manageable procedures and eliminated most of the GOTO commands.

Anyway, look for these Eamon adventures in May.

There will also be two disks of miscellaneous games ranging from card games to space arcade games. The kids will love it.

I will finally be releasing a disk of Music Studio songs. I've waited and waited for a decent public domain player program to show up but, alas, nothing. You will need to own Music Studio in order to best use this disc. I will include a player program from Activision however you must write a script file which includes pictures in order to play the songs; a definite hassle.

It's anybody's guess what other interesting goodies will arrive in time for inclusion in May's offerings. Be at the general meeting to check them all out.

After years of falling disk prices, the threatened increase in tariffs on certain Japanese electronic products may cause the prices for disks to double. The last word I heard was that computer disks were included in the products that would be subject to these 100% duties. They are expected to remain in effect for at least 3 months. By the time you read this, you may already find the price of disks have shot up.

From what I have heard Japanese computer disks have not even been allowed in the country for the past several weeks. Remember that all of this could change with a shift of the wind but the situation should be more clear by the May meeting. It wouldn't hurt to buy an extra box of disks before the possible rise in price.

At May's meeting we will continue our friendly roundtable discussions on a variety of topics in hopes of helping everyone get just a little bit more out of their ST. If you have anything that you would like to discuss, whether it be a hardware or software problem, or just a problem in understanding some particular Desktop function, don't be afraid to ask. Hopefully, the GFA Basic packages will be in by May and we can get going on organizing a little programming/instructional group.

At my prodding, LaVerne at National Computer Clinic, is currently involved in an interesting project that could be extremely beneficial to those ST owners who have been thinking about a hard disk. Custom drives, anyone? More on this later.

In closing, if you are interested in printware type of programs (Printmaster, Pagesetter, etc.), check out Certificate Maker from Springboard recently released for the ST. The GEM interface is a joy to use and within minutes you can be printing out a large assortment of custom Certificates ranging from the serious side to humorously trivial.

-Gil

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

May 16th at 2:00 pm.
June 13th at 2:00 pm.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley President 686-6796
Marty Schmidt Treasurer/Sec. 792-6029
Al Jennings 8-bit Disk Lib. 790-1980
Lance Middleton ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman Assis. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8- bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non- TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! TAG is having a desktop publishing meeting! Come on out to the May meeting and find out how to make your own PROFESSIONAL style flyers, newsletters, and publications. We'll be showing two software packages that are custom tailored to creating your own newspaper.

The first package will be News Station by Reeves software. Char Davis will demo this package, and will show us actual printouts of her creations. The club purchased this package and it will be raffled off at the end of the meeting.

On the ST side, Paul Bork will be demoing Publishing Partner by Soft Logik corporation. This is said by many to be the best desktop publishing package available for the ST. Come to the meeting and see for yourself. Hopefully by the meeting I will have the public domain font editor for Publishing Partner downloaded and available to anyone who wants it!

SNEAK PREVIEW

The month of June will find TAG taking a look at the various methods of backing up software. While TAG does not condone the illegal copying or pirating of software, we do feel that legitimate users should be able to exercise the right to back up their software. There are many products on the market that simply don't do the job, and many users get ripped off from false claims and advertisements. We'll talk about products that work, and many that don't! Tune in next month for further details.

Meeting Minutes

RELICS TO RELISH

Judging from the way that the April meeting went, it should have been held on April Fool's day (or maybe Friday the 13th!). The meeting started out all right. The first order of business was a discussion of the recent price increase, and it was unanimous that we keep getting the Michigan Atari Magazine. Besides, I think that I will have several advertisers by June! As a result of the price increase, however, we will no longer send three issues to people once they expire. The last issue they get will be marked "LAST ISSUE" (cute eh?). You will get NO issues once you expire, so remember to renew! We also discussed raising the price of library disks and raffle tickets, so that both functions would be self supporting. Both are good ideas, but we decided to hold off until I see if we actually get the ads I've been promised. This part of the meeting went OK, then...

It all started with poor Marty offering to do Al Paquette a favor. He brought his 800 to use for the demo of The Pawn. When he arrived, I informed him that the program required 64K to run, so he ran home to obtain his 130 XE. He returned, and 15 minutes into the meeting, we still didn't have a disk drive, so Marty offered (or was he badgered?) to go and get us a 1050 drive. He returned and we connected the system up -- and couldn't get the program to load! Char had two copies, the original and the backup, and both had worked on her system, but neither worked on the system we had on hand. To make a long story short, Char described the game to us, and we raffled it off anyway, certain that the problem lay in the disk drive. Ken Mercer won the game, and rumor has it that the game works fine on his computer! This was not the end of our troubles, however...

The next demo was 10th Frame, a bowling simulation by Access. Tom Wheeler, subbing for Paul Bork, demoed this excellent game on the ST. All of the sound is digitized, including the pin action sounds, the ball rolling down the alley, and the audience clapping when you get a spare or strike (the sound of a gutter ball is also included at no extra charge). The game allows you to play individually or in teams. The graphics are excellent, and game play is very good. This game was raffled off, and Joe Manelis won it. Things were now rolling smoothly...or so we thought!

The next demo was supposed to be of Championship Wrestling by Epyx, but Dan Barrowman didn't bring a joystick to play with. And guess what -- no one else did either! So all Dan could do was to load it up and let the computer whomp on him. Actually, it was fun to see Dan get creamed time after time!

WhilST Char and Dan were trying to decide what to do, I threw up a few public domain programs for the ST that I got from GEnie. The first was monopoly, and this is an excellent simulation of the real game. The board is graphically laid out on your screen in full color, and the computer handles all of the mundane chores, like banking. The computer will play up to three separate players against you, and it plays a mean game. All options are mouse controlled, and game play goes much faster than the actual board game. You even have options like trading. For free, you've got to get this game!

Another PD game that I displayed was Haunted House, an action adventure game in the same vein as Montezuma's Revenge on the 8- bit. The graphics are great, and game play is fast. Very good for PD! With these tidbits, we wrapped up the April Fool's meeting!

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:
Al Jennings 130 XE
George Stuart Disk Drive, Printer Interface
Gerry Reno Monitor
Marty Schmidt Printer 1080i

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Ron Hoffman Monitor
LeRoy Valley 1040 ST
Dan Barrowman Printer, cable

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.

SEARCHING...

The latest issue of STart contained a program called reboot that supposedly reset flags in your ST to cause a cold start when the reset button was pressed. As a side benefit, it was also supposed to turn off write verify for the floppy. While the source code contains the line to turn off the write verify, the PRG file doesn't! Anybody out there have a fix? Call LeRoy Valley at (517) 686-6796, or put it on the Chaos BBS.

DATA PROCESSING MANAGER

needed for large international educational foundation. Experience in management and operation of IBM System 34 or 36 required, as well as programming knowledge in RPG II. Word processing, personal computer, accounting, and supervisory experience preferred. Send resume and salary requirements to Ms. West, P.O. Box 1240, East Lansing, MI 48826.

GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG

Presidential Address

Well we're through April and into May, time just seems to fly by. As most of you know, I was not at the last meeting, but on a business trip, I will be back to the meeting in May. Because I was not there I can't give you a report on the meeting. So I will just jump into the new things. First:

* We have A SYSOP! and are know working on setting up our equipment, it shouldn't be long now before we have our own BBS!!!

* The next meeting will be on Telecomunications. The disk of the month will have a lot of programs on it, some of which you may already have, others will be new for you . One program I will include on the disk is a return stripper. One of the things I hate most with a 40 column screen is that when you go to print out text that you have captured with your buffer you only get 40 columns on your printer. This little program takes care on this for you, it strips away all your returns.

* We are looking for a good public domain program that will index all of our library so instead on printing out a list of all our programs, we will put them on disk so that you can search for them with your computer. If you have a program like this please bring it out.

* There seemed to be some interest in me teaching a class on using a spread sheet, (VisaCalc, SynCalc). If you would be interested in this please let me know.

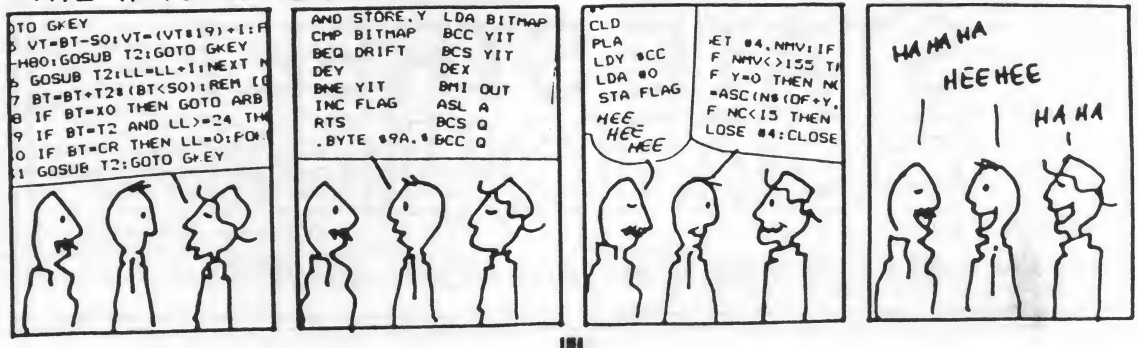
* We need Ideas on topics for our next meetings. Please let us know what you want to discuss.

* There has been a lot of discussion on the times of our meetings, many people have expressed an interest in staring the meeting earlier in the day. If you have an opinion on this please let me know.

Daniel Youngs 388-3164

GKAUG MEETS ONCE A MONTH on THE SECOND SATURDAY. THE TIME IS 2:00 AND THE MEETING PLACE IS DEWING HALL AT KALAMAZOO COLLEGE. OUR DUES ARE $20.00 PER YEAR.

THE INTERPRETER



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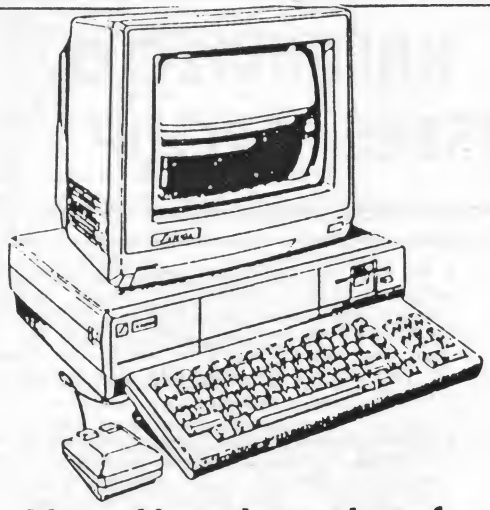
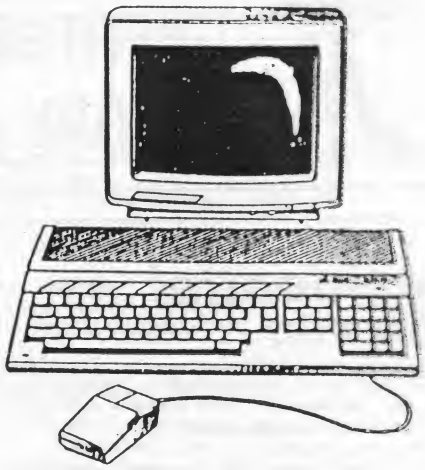

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WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING MAY 12 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting Minutes

REPORT ON 4/14/87 MEETING
by MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm in the main meeting room at the Ann Arbor Public Library. The normal stomping grounds, Wines Elementary School, was closed due to Easter Vacation. There was a short demonstration of the Atari CPR disk and Doug Feldman announced that 5 copies were available for sale through the 8-bit library. Doug also noted that the ST library now contains more than 15 disks, but that sales would not be available until someone volunteers to run this portion of the WAUG disk library.

There was an in-depth discussion about the club's affiliation with the Michigan Atari Magazine. Craig Harvey spoke for several minutes on the pros and cons of the options available: 1) retaining MAM as our official newsletter, or 2) publishing our own newsletter and subscribing to MAM on an individual basis. The vote was OVERWHELMINGLY in favor of producing our own newsletter with Pattie and Bill Rayl taking on the duties of "Newsletter Editors." The club will continue to send it's meeting minutes for publication and members will be encouraged to submit feature articles to both publications, however MAM will be sent only to those members who pay for their own copies, i.e.: it will not be funded from the WAUG Treasury. It would appear that many members want the best of both worlds as a significant number signed up to continue receiving MAM.

Mike Olin repeated his concerns about developing a formal club charter and holding formal officer elections. There will be a meeting of the acting officers before the next general membership meeting to review his proposals which will be presented to the membership at the May meeting.

The remainder of the evening was dedicated to the feature topic: ARCADE GAMES. There were demos of Leaderboard, Salmon Run, Alternate Reality ST, Ball Blazer, Rogue ST, Rescue On Fractalus, Karate Kid II ST and Nuclear Nick.

The next meeting will be held on May 12 and the feature topic will be Desk Top Publishing and Graphics Design.

HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL JIL

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

MAY 12 --- DESKTOP PUBLISHING & GRAPHICS DESIGN
JUN 9 --- OFFICER ELECTIONS & FLEA MARKET
NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST
SEP 8 --- DISK UTILITIES FOR ST & 8-BIT

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Meeting May 14 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

MEETING MINUTES and OTHER BITS
by Chuck Steele

Our April meeting was held Thursday April 16. We made an effort to contact everyone; however, we missed a few of you. Sorry we were unable to contact each of you. This months meeting will be May 14.

We brought up the cost of the MAM. As most of you know our old news letter which was 4 to 6 pages cost only $.23 each copy. Last year we decided to go with the Lansing group in their Magazine. This upped the cost to $.50 a copy. The CHAOS group informed me in March that the cost was going up to $.80 a copy. After much discussion it was decided that we would stay with the Michigan Atari Magazine. This cost each club member $9.60 per year. This would only leave the club $5.40 out of each membership dues to cover operating expenses and to purchase new hardware, software or text library material. So it was moved and voted on to raise the membership dues to $20 per year. So all membership renewals will now be $20 as of the next meeting.

We talked about the new Atari ST and the IBM clone. It will be interesting to see how the new clones will affect the computer market as a whole and the effect it has on Atari. We wish them well. It would be nice if the general public started thinking of Atari as a computer manufacturer rather than a game company. In Europe the perception IS that Atari is a computer company and the ST's are selling well there.

Todd burned out a chip in his computer while trying to up grade the RAM in this 800XL. So we didn't have the DOM. But we did have an ATARI movie which was playing while the meeting was going on. This was a sampling of some Atari software that covered such things as Games, educational, word processing, financial spreadsheets, astronomy, math, simulations, etc. I hope you enjoyed it.

Tom demoed a golf league spreadsheet that he made using SynCalc. With such a program one only needs to plug in the raw scores and the spreadsheet computes the rest (averages, handicaps). It is nice to see the Atari's put to a practical use. Thanks Tom.

The May meeting will be our last meeting until next fall. There will be a computer fair this month. We need some volunteers to help us man a booth at the Mall. Please give me a call if you are interested. We will also need some ideas and some programs to use for demonstration (some real neat stuff) because we will be going up against some big guns in the computer industry. So come to the next meeting with some good ideas.

Happy ATARI Computing!!

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

Support your ATARI Clubs!! Attend the monthly meetings, take part in the projects, and your use and enjoyment of your ATARI will grow with your knowlege and experience! GREAT CLUBS are part of what makes POWER without the PRICE more than just another motto!

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meetings

Wyoming Library
3350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

Presidential Address

Notes From the APRIL Meeting
by RON FARGO

Rod Fulk ran a modem demonstration for our group this month. Rod hooked his 130XE to a projection T.V., and first displayed from the B.B.S. view while explaining in detail what goes on when you call a B.B.S. The second part of his demo was how to log on to a board, and what to do when you do. Rod did an excellent job of covering communications software, what kind and for what use, etc.

There was general discussion about interface devices, and different types of modems, and questions were fielded by Rod Fulk and Ron Fargo.

Our club had a contest for members to submit graphics drawings for a new LOGO for G.R.A.S.S. The contestants displayed their designs on the projection T.V., and the members voted for the best entry. The prize of a one year subscription to the news letter was won by David Sheets, who made his entry using MAGIC, part of the TURBO BASIC utility package. His winning logo is reprinted here, but looks much better in full color! Our congratulations go out to David for entering, and a job well done.

No official business was done, and the balance of the meeting was a free for all!

GRAND
RAPIDS
ATARI
SYSTEMS
SUPPORTERS

Viewpoint

AN OPEN LETTER TO COMPUTER AND SOFTWARE DEALERS
From Lee J. Kronenberg
C.H.A.O.S.- Lansing, Michigan

Dear Dealers,

There are several of you whose good business practices have provided us users with many hours of happy computing. If you fit this description, this is a thank you note. We will continue to deal with you without hesitation.

However, there are others of you whose business practices are so shoddy that we cannot, in good conscience, continue to waste time, effort, or anger. You have lost us as customers. Don't blame your prices - blame your services. For the same reasons that you would not deal deal with questionable suppliers, we will not accept some of the things you have done.

Here are some of the reasons that we won't deal with you again. For these reasons also, we will advise other potential customers against dealing with you.

DON'T:

1. ...Advertise a program for $45.00 and then notify me that the price is actually $63.00 - that the magazine made a "mistake" publishing your ad.

2. ..."Lose" my cashier's check when I refuse to pay the added cost to buy the higher priced software.

3. ...Advertise a program when you don't actually have it.

4. ...Promise to send a program immediately and then give me a "due-out" for several months.

5. ...Send my friend the same program that has been due out to me for several months.

6. ...Promise to get a program for me and then not do it.

7. ...Quote me a price which is $20.00 more expensive than the price you charged my friend two weeks before.

8. ...Send me a program for an Apple Computer when my order said ATARI.

9. Force me to pay the shipping costs to return a program for which you errored. Reimburse me for those costs.

10. ...Promise to write a program for me and keep me waiting two years to get it. Then, to lie that it was completed, but later destroyed by: the heat, the dog, the computer, the magnetic forces of the earth (or so on).

11. ...Promise to fix my computer within 24 hours, and then not touch it until I begin to camp on your doorstep.

12. ...Estimate the cost of repair at $50.00 and then tack on $20.00 because the insulator on the infidibulum was furdazzled, and you couldn't (means: didn't try to) get in touch with me.

13. ...Order a program for me, promise to save it for me and then sell it to someone else because it meant a quick extra buck for you.

14. ...Tell me you have a program in stock and when I rush down to get it, you tell me you can't find it, your salesperson sold it, the program is bad, or your dog ate it.

For all these things and more, Goodbye dealer. I won't say it has been nice because it hasn't been! We users are tired of the false promises, the lies, and the absolute deceit. We will deal with your competitor even if it means higher prices. Sad - it could have been you, if you had only treated us the way you yourself would like to be treated.

ST Review

ZOOMRACKS II
review by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Simple yet powerful. How often have we, as users, heard these words used to describe every new database that comes along. Zoomracks II by Quickview Systems, makes this same claim and, for the first time, I'm inclined to agree. Quickview Systems does a wonderful job of making their database very usable to first time users, and yet still provides a lot of horsepower for the more experienced and demanding user. Zoomracks II is not copy protected and works very well on my Hard drive.

Zoomracks II is based on a "rack" metaphor, identical to the original Zoomracks. Information is stored on "Quick Cards", and

these cards are in turn stored in racks which may be loaded into memory (you can load up to 9 racks into memory at once). A good analogy is that of the time card rack in most factories. Worker's time cards are stored in racks. The only line visible on the time card is the top line which is generally the worker's name. By pulling the card out of the rack, you can access all of the information on that worker. Information on Quick Cards is stored in fields (called field scrolls), which are completely user definable. Each Quick Card can have a maximum of 27 fields, and each field can contain up to 250 lines, 80 characters per line.

Upon entering Zoomracks II you are presented with a screen layout which is laid out very well. At the top of the screen the current racks loaded into memory are shown. The main part of the screen shows a disk directory of all racks and the size of each. Near the bottom of the screen there is a menu box which displays all of the currently available commands. The last line on the screen shows the current Quickcard number and a "gas gauge" which shows you how full your memory is.

All input selections can be entered with either the keyboard, or by pointing and clicking with the mouse. To load a rack, simply point and click. If you load multiple racks, all of the rack names will be displayed at the top, and, by going into multirack mode, you can also view all of the racks simultaneously on the screen. To accomplish this, Quickview uses a feature they call Smartzoom, which compresses the text (usually removing the vowels) so that the first line of each card is still readable while occupying a small amount of space on the screen. By clicking on the card, you can select that card for reading, updating, or printing.

Upon entering Zoomracks II, your first task is to create a rack and a new quickcard template. The template defines how all of your quickcards will look for the entire rack. The new rack is created by simply pressing INS Z and you are automatically placed in the template edit mode and asked for the first fieldscroll name. You can create multiple fieldscrolls on the same line, or place them on individual lines. The names of your rack or fieldscrolls can be changed at any time.

After defining the quickcard template you are now ready to enter your first card by pressing INS Q. This creates a new quickcard and prompts you to enter text for the first fieldscroll. The tab key advances you to the next fieldscroll, and a return enters the quickcard into the rack. If, after months of entering data, you need to make a change, don't worry. Zoomracks II allows you to reposition, delete, and add fieldscrolls. This is a great feature that most other databases don't have! Remember though, once you delete a fieldscroll from the template, you delete it for every card in the rack (along with all data associated with the fieldscroll). If you make a major mistake, Zoomracks II supports the UNDO key. In most cases, this key will save your you know what.

Along with editing the quickcard template, you are also given a host of commands to edit the text contained in fieldscrolls. You can cut a character, word, or line. And anything that you can cut, you can paste. The ability to paste an entire Quickcard or fieldscroll into the existing fieldscroll is really slick. You can browse through text, moving a word at a time in either direction, and you can also jump to the beginning or end of the fieldscroll. Once again, you can undo all editing changes at any time by using the UNDO key. Also at your disposal are commands to reformat existing text. You can adjust the right margin, set tabs, split an existing line into two lines, or join two lines into one. A nice touch is to allow you to use either insert or typeover mode. Once all of your changes are set, simply use the CTRL R (Reformat Paragraph) command. Zoomracks II actually has all of the commands necessary to make it a mini word processor.

Since you have the capability to load 8 racks of data (rack #1 is dedicated to macros - I'll get to that later) and each rack can hold thousands of cards, you need commands to move around easily. Zoomracks II has two move menus: the Next/Prior menu, and the Goto menu. The Next/Prior menu is meant for local moves. With it you can move to the next or prior: Quickcard, fieldscroll, rack, or line. Using one and two keystroke commands, you can quickly move back and forth between any of the items mentioned above. When you have to move to a specific spot, you use the Goto menu. Using the Goto menu you can: move to a specific rack, move to the beginning or end of a rack, mark your current location so you can return to it (very nice touch!), and you can also search for a text string! The last option is very handy for finding a particular quickcard in a rack. The search option also has what's called a search lock. This tells Zoomracks II to find and lock onto any card which matches the specified string. These selected cards are then considered your entire rack until you disable the search lock mode. Very handy for selecting and printing out specific cards.

While all popular word processors have the ability to cut and paste, not many databases sport that feature. With Zoomracks II you can cut, copy, paste, and replace racks, quickcards, fieldscrolls, and output forms (more about this later). Zoomracks II has four buffers: a line buffer, a fieldscroll buffer, a quickcard buffer, and a rack buffer. When any item is cut or copied, it is placed in it's respective buffer. I used this option to get around the fact that Zoomracks II does not support multiple column printing. I wanted to print labels three wide, so I used one rack to create the labels.

then printed the labels to a fieldscroll. Then I created a new rack with a quickcard with three fieldscrolls on the same line (LABEL1, LABEL2, LABEL3). I replaced the fieldscroll with the printed out one and I had a label printout three wide! The flexibility that this option gives you is tremendous.

Of course, any database is worthless unless you can output your data in the form that YOU want it. Zoomracks II allows you to output your data to the printer, the screen, a fieldscroll, or an ASCII text file. You have a great deal of flexibility in building your own output form. You can send printer init codes, specify headers and footers, and print all or part of any fieldscroll! You can even put remarks in your output form to remind you why you did something and have page numbers printed! Any text entered in the output form that is not part of the form and is not a remark gets printed out just as it would on a word processor. Thus you could conceivably generate a form letter in the output section of Zoomracks II and specify field names where names and addresses go! Output forms can be stored in racks, so you can build a library of output forms for any application! My disk catalogue has several output forms -- one for three wide labels, one for two wide, and one for single width. It also has an output form to print a listing of the current software that I have. The output section is a joy to work with!!!

Zoomracks II also supports limited math functions (add, subtract, multiply, and divide) and sorting. It has two registers into which you can either enter numbers manually or load them from fieldscrolls. The number from the register can then be placed in any fieldscroll. The adding machine has the capability to sum all numbers found in the highlighted fieldscroll, and it can also sum all numbers (of the highlighted fieldscroll) of ALL cards in the rack. If you need to sort your rack on a different fieldscroll, don't worry. Just move to the fieldscroll you want and press S. The only drawback is that it treats numbers like letters... 19 comes before 9 (use 09).

Perhaps the most exciting feature of Zoomracks II (next to the output forms) is the capability to use macros. All macros must reside in a rack which starts with the letters MAC (i.e. MACDISK). If a racks name is MACAUTO it get automatically loaded when Zoomracks II is run. Each macro rack can contain 27 macros (A-Z,$) and only one macro rack can be loaded into memory at one time. However, you can load in a new macro rack whenever you need one. To create a new macro you simply place Zoomracks II into learn mode, then execute the keystrokes that you want the macro to perform and assign it to a letter. You can now run this sequence of keystrokes once by invoking the macro, or you can run the macro n times by using #n prior to specifying the macro name. In addition to all of the normal Zoomracks II commands, macros have an expanded set of commands which include looking for user input, ringing the bell, and much more. Macros really make this program perform -- don't be afraid to use them! If a macro is named $, then it will run automatically once the rack is loaded up.

A very unique (as if Zoomracks isn't unique) option available in Zoomracks II is the ability to display Degas pictures. You simply enter the name of the Degas picture into a fieldscroll, then execute the Zoom Degas file function, and the picture is displayed on your monitor. This opens up a great deal of possibilities. If you develop macros for applications, you could automatically call certain informative pictures up when different functions are performed. You could catalogue your Degas collection, and view it with the same database!

Well, we've covered all of the main features of Zoomracks II, and I'm telling you, it is an excellent program. The documentation is very good and they give you a template for your function keys along with a reference card that covers all of the commands available. But, they say no product is perfect, and Zoomracks II is no different. Here, then, is a list of changes and/or additions that I'd like to see:

1) The Search function does not look for an exact match. If the search string is UTIL01 and Zoomracks II doesn't find it, it searches for UTIL0, then UTIL, etc. There are times when I need an EXACT match. If it doesn't find it, tell me NOT FOUND.

2) I need 132 column support. Currently Zoomracks II is limited to 80 columns. I can't put my printer in condensed mode and print labels three wide. Actually, Zoomracks should support 256 columns for the wide carriage models as well. If you are listening Quickview, make the screen scroll right and left to support it on a color screen!

3) The macro command set should be extended to include at least an IF-THEN statement. Also, since you can see the quickcard number at the bottom of the screen, why can't I find a quickcard based on that number (and have a macro command to extract it).

Well, those are my gripes, small as they may be. This package is dynamite, and anyone can run it! (No fooling.) The list price is $149.95, but most mail order houses are selling it for $95-$100. If you need a database, and don't want to spend weeks learning it, then buy Zoomracks II. Quickview also offers starter packages with prebuilt applications for business, home, and clubs.

Programs

JOYSTICK MENU CONTROL
For "Analog's" Disk Menu Program
David Bryant
G.K.A.U.G.

For all the armchair programmers out there, here is a small modification you can do to the Menu Program that Analog provides on their disk every month. Place a copy of your current Analog Disk in the first disk drive and just enter the following lines and list to your disk by typing...

LIST "D:ALOGMENU.LST"

Now load the Analog Menu by typing...

LOAD "D:MENU"

Next, merge the modifications with the Menu Program by typing...

ENTER "D:ALOGMENU.LST"

Now save the modified version back to disk by typing...

SAVE "D:MENU"

When you run the modified program, the cursor will automatically step by each file and allow you enough time to press the trigger on your Joystick plugged into Port #1. You can still use the <SELECT> and <START> Keys also.

```
151 REM ****************************
152 REM * CHANGE LINES 151-180 OF *
153 REM * THE ANALOG MENU PROGRAM *
154 REM * TO GET AUTOMATIC CURSOR *
155 REM * MOVEMENT,  AND JOYSTICK *
156 REM * TRIGGER SELECTION!      *
157 REM ****************************
158 REM * G.K.A.U.G. *  D. BRYANT *
159 REM ****************************
160 POSITION 0,2:? "->":POSITION 1,21:? "USE
<SELECT> AND <START> or <TRIGGER>"
170 Y=2:X=0:XX=X:YY=Y:LOOP=1
175 LOOP=LOOP+1:IF LOOP=100 THEN C=5:LOOP=1:GOTO
200
177 IF STRIG(0)=0 THEN 250
180 C=PEEK(53279):IF C<>5 AND C<>6 THEN 175
```

Just Starting

Computer Mathematics.
by Clinton Pierce (GAG)

A nasty subject to deal with. It seems that that phrase conjures up images of scientists sitting hunched over a terminal hooked up to a giant mainframe built in the stone ages waiting for it to compute pi to the 9.9e+97th decimal place.... Arrgh! But if you think that's all there is to math, you're in for a shock.

Computers are built for math. Everything they do is geared for math. So doesn't it seem natural that when dealing with math you should turn to your computer? Why don't you then? It's too hard and too dull.

Are you kidding? Dull? If you like art, look on the cover of Antic April 1986. THAT is a mathematical equation. What about Life in the same issue? Written 17 years ago, it can still be found on many systems. Useless you say? What about spreadsheets? Could your computer beat you in chess without it?

Difficult? It can be. If you're a good enough hack, you could plot a function, say, Y=SIN(x). (You remember that function? It's in your manual.) It's a 1 line program: 10 DEG: GR.8 :COLOR 1 :FOR T=1 TO 319 :PLOT T, SIN(T*1.125)*40+90: NEXT T Got that? Now you've got a sine curve. (The 1.125, is to get the whole 360 degree curve, *40 to make the curve more pronounced, the 90 is so that it doesn't straddle the x=0 line at the top.)

Big deal. Well it is. Use your imagination for a second... Take that sine curve and rotate it about the center of the screen (using a GTIA multicolor mode) and then rotate the colors through the sine-star. Interesting, eh? If you're good with ML, take the (T*1.125) and change it so that a value is added to T, and then increment the value and re-draw the sine curve. Do this fast enough, and what you have is a transverse wave. (If you could slow down light, that's what it would look like.) Plotting polar equations will give you, of all things, flowers.

If you're a student, and are studying ANY branch of mathematics, a computer is only a little less useful than a calculator. (You can't take a computer to a test.) Most of my past math teachers cringed when they found out I used my computer to do my homework. One teacher, however, said "if you can write the program to do it, fine." So do it!

Computers are good at repetitive calculations. For example, synthetic division, extracting roots, factoring, plotting equations, and factorials. All of which you must be able to do to pass high school math. Math books and computers were built for each other. Many books have an algorithm (step by step instructions) for solving certain problems.

Example: to find a square root (divide & average method):

a) estimate the root
b) divide the radicand by the estimate
c)average the quotient and divisor to get a better estimate
d) repeat b & c as many times as needed.

There's the flowchart, now just write the program. There are other procedures that are usually spelled out in flowchart form, some chemistry examples; finding PH, balancing equations, writing formulas, etc...

If you study music, math is a principle concept of utmost importance. If you've got a tuning fork and can calculate an individual note on your computer (A above middle C, for example) accurately and find the frequency, do so. A has a frequency of 440Hz (and a SOUND value of 72). The next note up, B, has a frequency of A times the twelfth root of 2 which is about 466.16Hz. Use another mathematical method, called interpolation, to find the new SOUND value. Your notes will now be mathematically accurate.

You don't like art, don't like music, don't go to school, but just like to BBS. Well, even if you don't program, you're still not safe from mathematics. If you've ever Uploaded or Downloaded a file you know what a protocol is.

The Christensen protocol works like this (with variations):

1. receiving computer sends a NAK
2. sending computer sends a SOH, then a 1 byte block number, then another byte which is the 1's compliment of the block number, 128 data bytes, then the checksum byte (=132 characters)
3. receiving computer its own checksum (started after the third byte after SOH), to see if it matches the 132nd byte sent
4. if it does, it sends an ACK and goes to step #2, if not sends an NAK and starts over again. WHEW! The 1's compliment and the checksum are both based on mathematical principles.

"What's the point of this long winded article?" you ask. Ok, bear with me then I'll get down from my pulpit.

The next time you write a game, use a fractal-like shape for a background, use real projectile and acceleration formulas for missles, and instead of lines use curves. When you're listening to a lecture on calculus, write down an algorithm, run home from school, and right away write the program. And as you learn more, add "bells & whistles" to the program. But ALWAYS keep in mind your math whenever you program. If nature is mathematics, and nature is inherently beautiful, wouldn't you want your programs to be beautiful also?

ST Technical

From the ACCESS Key, Sacramento, CA - Dec. 86

ST CONTROL CHARACTERS

CLEAR SCREEN: ESC E Clears all characters from the screen and moves the cursor to Home position, the top-left corner of the screen. (Row1, Column 1)

CLEAR TOP OF SCREEN: ESC d Clears the screen from Home position to, and including the cursor position.

CLEAR BOTTOM OF SCREEN: ESC J Clears the screen from, and including the cursor position, to the bottom of the screen.

CLEAR LINE: ESC l Erases the entire line the cursor is on and moves the cursor to the leftmost column.

CLEAR BEGINNING OF LINE: ESC o Erases from the beginning of the line to, and including, the cursor position.

CLEAR END OF LINE: ESC K Erases from cursor position to the end of the line.

INSERT LINE: ESC L Inserts a new blank line at the cursor position and moves all following lines down one line, and puts the cursor at the beginning of the blank line.

DELETS LINE: ESC M Deletes the line that the cursor is on and moves all of the following lines up one line, adding a blank line at the bottom. Puts the cursor at the beginning of the line following the one that was deleted.

MOVE CURSOR ESC Y row+31 Col+31 The two characters that follow the "Y" specify the row and column to which the cursor is to be moved. Rows are numbered 1 - 25, and columns are numbered 1 - 80. Note: this command is four bytes long, instead of two.

CURSOR UP ESC A Moves the cursor up one line. Note: this command and the three after it, have no effect if they would move the cursor off the screen.

CURSOR DOWN ESC B Moves the cursor down one line.

CURSOR RIGHT ESC C Moves the cursor one position to the right.

CURSOR LEFT ESC D Moves the cursor one position to the left.

HOME CURSOR ESC H Moves the cursor to the home position.

INDEX UP: ESC I Moves the cursor up one line. If the cursor is on the top line, a scroll down is performed.

DISABLE CURSOR: ESC f Causes the cursor to be invisible.

ENABLE CURSOR ESC e Restores the cursor to visibility.

SAVE CURSOR ESC j Saves the current cursor position.

RESTORE CURSOR ESC k Moves the cursor to a previously saved position. If you use this command without previously saving the cursor, then the cursor is moved to the Home position.

INVERSE VIDEO: ESC p Characters are displayed as background color characters on a foregroung colored cell.

NORMAL VIDEO ESC q Characters appear as normal.

WORD WRAP ON ESC v Causes the first character past the last displayable position on the line to be placed in the first character position on the next line. The screen scrolls up if necessary.

WORD WRAP OFF ESC w After the last displayable character on a line has been reached, the characters overprint; thus, only the last character received is displayed.

SET FOREGROUND COLOR: ESC b color Selects the color in which the character is displayed. The character "color" must be in the range of 0 - 15. In medium resolution, you may choose from four colors; in low resolution, you may choose from 16 colors. Note: this command and the next one are three bytes long, instead of two.

SET BACKGROUND COLOR ESC c color Selects the color of the cell that contains the characters. The character "color" is as above.

Examples:

1) To move cursor to row 5, column 10, you would use:

```
ST BASIC: PRINT CHR$(");"Y";CHR$(36);CHR$(41)
PASCAL  : write( chr(27),'Y',chr(36),chr(41) )
C       : printf("%c%c%c%c",27,'Y',36,41)
```

2) To clear the screen, use:

```
ST BASIC: PRINT CHR$(27);"E";
PASCAL  : write( chr(27),'E' )
C       : printf("%c%c",27,'E')
```

(The ACCESS Key wishes to thank Ric Kalford, who gleaned the above information from the Developer's Package.

ST Review

MT-C SHELL from BECKMEYER DEVELOPMENT
Reviewed by Craig Harvey (W.A.U.G.)

When I first thought of getting an ST, the one thing I really wanted to do was run a bulletin board while being able to write programs -- at the same time. I had seen the ads from Beckemeyer Development Tools for a multi-tasking operating system called Micro RTX, so I assumed it would do what I wanted. After a couple letters and phone calls trying to confirm this capability, my understanding was that MT C-shell would easily do what I wanted, but due to all the other things it could also do, it would hog about 300K of RAM, so was only recommended for an ST with at least 1 meg of RAM. The Micro RTX would take up much less RAM, but it was not recommended for anyone who didn't know A LOT about programming multi-tasking software, including use of something called "extended service calls" (if I remember correctly). Not knowing anything about such things, and having a 1 meg upgrade on order, I took the plunge and got MT C-Shell.

MT C-Shell is a very powerful system that does provide the ability to run programs in the "background" while doing a totally separate activity in the foreground. The number of background programs is limited only by available RAM. This is just one small part of what it can do. If you are familiar with UNIX, you'll feel pretty much at home (based on comments from people I've showed it to). If you don't know anything of UNIX, you'll learn fast or get very frustrated, since to do a simple thing like getting a directory of what's on a disk takes a new command: "LS".

The manual is not intended to be a UNIX instruction manual, but it does give a complete list of available commands. There is enough

description of each to get you going and enable you to run programs, do normal DOS file management operations, and whet your appetite for some unfamiliar capabilities. These include making batch files that seem like they can do anything (e.g. automatically check if a folder has a new file in it every other Tuesday at 1:23 pm, and if so, create a new folder to move it to, while replacing any word beginning with "P" with the maiden name of your great uncle's mother-in-law). I suspect this is a bit of an exaggeration on my part, but then again I still have a lot to learn about it.

One other important function of this system, like UNIX, is multi-user capability. If you use this option, other people can call up via modem and log in using their computer as a terminal to run programs or manipulate files on your system.

Now the bad news. Although the system does allow multi-tasking, whatever you want to run in the background can not be looking to the keyboard for any input. So although it should work fine to run a long compile and/or use as a print spooler, it would not let me run the Michtron BBS in the background. I confirmed this with another call to Beckemeyer, but was also given some good news for anyone who will be getting a BBS in the future.

Beckemeyer has received co-operation from OMI who make the BBST as well as the makers of the FOREM BBS, and revised versions of these are either available now or will be soon. Then they may be able to run in the background with MT C-Shell. Although I've heard of another revision of the Michtron BBS in the works, I don't believe it is planned to be compatible with MT C-Shell.

In closing, if you have a hard drive and a couple megs of RAM and like UNIX, this system is a must for you. If you have one single-sided drive and 512K forget it. For anything in between, you'll have to decide for yourself.

Eight is Enough

VARIABLE TABLE OF CONTENTS
BY Bill Eash

Have you ever seen a diskette full of programs and when you looked at the directory, it had ZERO sectors available. Wow! it really takes some doing' to pack right down to the last sector. Or possibly you've seen a free sector count larger than was possible. But wait, don't be fooled, add the sectors of all files to see if the total is 707. If not, you have a diskette with a modified or damaged VTOC. Let me explain.

First, lets talk briefly about the Disk Operating System and it's "Volume Table Of Contents". There are two DOS control blocks in the middle of the diskette. They're placed there for quick access from either end of the diskette. One is the "File Directory" which contains the names and locations of the files on the diskette. The other control block is the "VTOC" and it tells DOS where and how much free space is on the diskette.

Let's look at the format of the VTOC, and you can begin to understand how some folks modify it to prevent further allocations on it (or fool you into believing it's completely full).

The VTOC control block is a single sector (128 characters)
location is sector 360.

byte 0	DOS puts an "02" here
BYTE 1 & 2 maximum sectors	THE VALUE IS 707 DECIMAL or 'HEX'. 02C3 but stored here as C302 (remember to reverse the low and to reverse the low and HIGH BYTES)
BYTE 3 & 4 free sectors	same as bytes 1 & 2 on a freshly formatted disk or what's left after files have been added
byte 10 to 99	THIS IS THE ALLOCATION bit map. One bit for each sector. If the bit is on, the sector is free

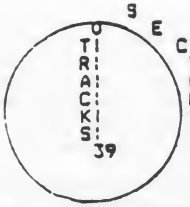
Before you skip the remainder of this article, be brave, it won't get any deeper. You can probably guess what comes next. If we ZERO the "number of sectors available", then we have accomplished what we started out to do. Boot DOS and list the directory and you'll see that there are ZERO sectors available where there were plenty only a few moments before.
(I use DISKSCAN to do my disk modification)

Now the second part. How do we correct the sector count or recover the free sectors that are there but not accounted for. Just reverse the process. Count the sectors allocated by adding the size of all files in the directory. Next, subtract that from 707 and convert the results to 'HEX'. Now place the number in the VTOC in the right field (don't forget to reverse the low and high bytes). That's the hard way to do it. I use a simple way, DOSWIZ will do it automatically (nothing to calculate).

Now that we have all this power, remember "a little power is dangerous" so before you do anything, COPY your diskette and use the backup copy to play with.

See Chart on next page.

DISK SECTOR STRUCTURE



40 Tracks (0-39)
18 Sectors/Track = 720 (0-719)
Track 0 = Sectors 0-17 or 1-18
Track 39 = Sectors 702-719 or 703-720
DOS can only handle Sector Numbers from 0 to 719
Disk Drives will only accept commands for Sectors 1-720

Disk Directory	8	sectors 361-360
VTOC - Volume Table of Contents	1	sector 360
FMS - File Management System	3	sectors 1-3
	707	sectors 128 Characters/Sector
Total	719	sectors

DIRECTORY SECTOR - Names and Information for all files on disk-8 Sectors (361-368)

Each Entry - 16 Bytes. 8 entries on 1 sector (16 x 8 = 128 bytes)
8 sectors x 8 = 64 entries total

For each Entry:

Byte

0	1	2	3	4	5 - 12	13 - 15
Status Byte	Length (in sectors) LSB	Length (in sectors) MSB	Start Sector LSB	Start Sector MSB	Filename (primary) or space	Ext or Spaces

Bits

7	6	5	4 - 2	1	0
File Deleted	File In Use	File Locked	Spares	DOS-2 File	File Open for Output

VTOC - Keeps track of which sectors are being used - Sector 360

Byte

0	1	2	3	4	5 - 9	10 - 99	100 - 127
Use Byte	Total # of Sectors LSB	Total # of Sectors MSB	Total Free Sectors LSB	Total Free Sectors MSB	Not Used	Sector Use Map	Not Used

Sector Use Map - Byte 10 to Byte 99:
Each Bit of each Byte represents one sector on the Disk
If the bit is 0, then that sector is being used
If the bit is 1, then that sector is free
Bit 7 of byte 10 represents Sector 1, etc, to Bit 0 of Byte 99
which represents Sector 720

DATA SECTORS - Saved or Listed Programs, Text files, Data Files, ets, - 128 Bytes

Byte 0 - 124 - Actual Data
125 - 127 - Sector Identity Data (Link Data)

Byte
Bits

125								126								127
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	# of actual bytes in This Sector (0-124)
File # This Sector belongs to								Next Sector of this File								
	512	256	128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1						

BINARY FILE HEADER - First 6 bytes of First Sector

Binary File Data - Created with Binary Save Option:

Byte

0	1	2	3	4	5
FF Binary File Definition Bytes	FF	Start Address LSB	Start Address MSB	End Address LSB	End Address MSB

Boot Sectors - No Cartridge or DOS:

Byte

0	1	2	3	4	5
0 by Tradition	# of Sectors to load	Load Address LSB	Load Address MSB	Address to Start Executing LSB	Address to Start Executing MSB

HELP START Just Starting

What's in a Language?

The following article was compiled by Sally Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.) from many sources, including Compute Magazine, Atari's Assembler Manual, Forth : a text and reference by Kelly and Spies, with the chart by Donald Forbes (J.A.C.G.).

Programming Languages are the means that we communicate with our computers. There are many different languages: BASIC, Logo, Pascal, FORTRAN, COBOL, Forth, Pilot, Assembly, C, ACTION, and more.

Each language was created for a specific purpose. There are certain functions performed by these languages that make them good for specific applications which others are not suitable.

Lets briefly look at how the computer operates. Basically, the computer is a machine that is able to turn many switches on and off very, very quickly (a million or more times per second). Each switch is able to be represented by either a zero for off and an one for on. These switches are in the computer's memory. Numbers, letters and any other data in memory can be stored in the computer's memory. When you depress a key on keyboard, the computer translates these into a sequence of ons and offs.

The central processing unit (CPU) then reads these ones and zeroes to find out what to do. The 1's and 0's that the CPU responds to comprise a program at its most basic level, and actually make up the only type of program the computer can run directly.

Human beings, unlike computers, do not easily think in sequences of 1's and 0's. We need to have a language to communicate with the computer. The most primative language, called machine language, simply represents the instructions to the microprocessor as a sequence of larger numbers, which when stored in the computer are represented to it as 1's and 0's.

Machine language is still pretty difficult, so a still higher language is used, in which each instruction to the computer is represented as an abbreviation (called a mnemonic), which for example tell the computer to transfer a number from memory to a register in the CPU. Each mnemonic is then assembled by a program which was written in machine language so as to form a sequence of 1's and 0's in memory. That program is called an assembler. This level of language is called assembler or assembly language.

Machine language instructions can be executed faster than BASIC instructions. Machine language programs use less memory than Basic programs. It is possible to write parts of a BASIC program that need to be done quickly and efficiently in machine language. They are subroutines called USR functions.

There are some disadvantages to machine language. It takes a programmer longer to write machine language program. Each instruction used has its own numeric code which needs to be sought out from a table each time they are used. Each machine language Operation Code (Op Code) must be placed in memory in the correct sequence for the successful operation of the program. The programmer must calculate and include in the instruction exactly how many memory locations must be skipped to arrive at the correct instruction, when branches are made to change the sequential operation of the program. The detail work involved in machine language programming is tremendous, and the chance for programming errors is very high.

Assembly language elimates many of the drawbacks of machine language programming. Each assembly language instruction has its own mnemonic code which is an abbreviation of the operation to be performed. These are a lot easier to work with than numeric codes of machine language. The assembly language program has line numbers similar to BASIC, and the program is automatically placed into the correct sequence of memory locations by the assembler. Through the use of labels (combinations of words, letters and/or numbers) branches are made to labeled instructions, and no calculations are required (the assembler does it for us). The assembler creates the machine language program for us from the mnemonic codes, eliminating all the time-consuming detail work. The chance of programming errors is much less than for programs constructed by hand in machine language.

Assembler language is still pretty inconvenient for most people's needs, so assembler language is used to write languages that are removed one more step from the functioning of the CPU. These languages are the so-called high-level languages such as FORTRAN, BASIC COBOL, APL, FORTH and Pascal. They use convenient symbols that are simple for people to use, (Such as * to multiply two numbers), and convert them to the sequence of machine language instructions that the computer can understand. These high-level languages serve to bridge the gap between people and computers.

High-level languages tradionally work in one of two ways. They are either classified as being interpreted or compiled. A compiled language is one in which the entire program is converted to machine language once, and then when the

program is run it is run as machine language. The source code is the English like program text. The compiled code is the machine-language instructions. We often refer to the text of a program simply as the code, whether it be machine language, assembler language, or a high-level language.

The compiled languages were the first developed. These include FORTAN, ALGOL, and COBOL. They are often still the preferred languages for large mainframe computers. The advantage of a compiled language is that less memory may be required for the programs. The bulky source code doesn't have to be in the computer whenever a program is run. Since the source code is translated to machine code only once, execution of the program is usually quite fast. Compilation is time consuming. Every time the program is changed, it must be compiled again.

An interpreted language has the source code translated to machine code (interpreted) line by line every time the program is run. BASIC is usually an interpreted language, although there are compiled versions of BASIC as well. Of course interpretation takes time during program execution, so an interpreted language is inherently slower to run than a compiled one. On the other hand, the corrected source code can be easily and quickly tested. Error messages in interpreted languages are also usually very complete and easy to understand. Interpreted languages encourage both programming and learning by trial and error. BASIC was originally designed to teach about computer languages. Interpreted languages make interaction between the programmer and the program relatively easy.

Higher level languages are continually being developed. People have very different programming styles. More languages provide more choices. Some special programming jobs require specialized tools. The language used for writing an accounting program might not be the best for writing an adventure game.

FORTRAN (FORmula TRANslator was one of the first high-level languages to be developed in 1954.

COBOL (COmmon Business Oriented Language) was created for accountants. It is often used to write payroll programs and other applications in large data processing departments.

BASIC, which is short for Beginner's All-purpose Symbolic Instruction Code, comes with many of today's personal computers.

C has many advantages over other programming languages. It has a large variety of operators and commands which can be used to write anything from operating systems to accounting packages. Many of the C compilers on the market today were written in C. C is a portable language. A C program written on one computer can be run with littler or no modification on any other computer with a C compiler. The idea of "write it once" takes on real meaning with C.

C is fast in execution speed. Situations arise where execution speed is critical; sorting is a common example. Coding the program in assembly language was the usual solution. The problem arises when new CPU chips are introduced, the programmer is forced to learn new instruction set for each CPU. Although you will spend time learning C, you won't have to waste time learning a new language each time a new CPU comes on the market. With a good C compiler, the difference in execution speed between C and an assembler will go unnoticed in all but the most demanding cases.

Another advantage is that C lends itself well to structured programming techniques. It forces the programmer to think of function modules or blocks. Each block has a specialized purpose or function. C programs involve little more than arranging these modules to perform the overall task of the program. This modular approach makes program debugging and maintance easier. C is a flexible language. You can make it do just about anything you want. You can use it to create your own language in c.

Pascal was the first language specifically designed to encourage structured programming. Pascal is popular in high schools and colleges. Instructors say Pascal teaches good programming. It is easy to follow the flow of a program written in Pascal.

Logo is a high-level programming language, best known for its use as a teaching tool with beginning computer programmers. Logo was created for young children. Many elementary schools now teach Logo.

Forth is an unusual language. It was orginally developed to control telescopes in observatories. Forth fits in to the scheme of languages roughly between machine language and high-level languages like BASIC. New functions and commands can be defined and become a part of the language. Forth is a language that lets us create our own personal language. We can build the language piece by piece until finally a single word runs the whole program.

Here is a tabulation of the principle features of ten high-level languages. The ratings are on a scale from 1 to 5. (very poor-1, poor-2, fair-3, good-4, excellent-5) and the following * stands for best-in-category.

	BASIC	C	COBOL	Forth	FORTRAN	LISP	Logo	Modula-2	Pascal	PILOT
Numerical Computations	4	4	2	2	5*	2	3	4	4	3
Character Handling	5*	5	4	3	2	5	5	4	4	3
Data structures	3	5	5	2	3	4	4	5*	5*	1
Control structure	5*	4	2	3	4	2	4	5	4	5
Console input / output	5*	4	2	3	4	2	4	5	4	5
File input / output	4	4	5*	3	4	2	2	5	4	2
Subroutine interface	2	3	2	3	5	4	4	5*	4	2
Low-level operations	3	5*	2	5	2	2	2	5	3	1
User friendliness	5	3	3	2	3	4	5*	4	4	5

What does it all mean? You may end up with only one wife or only one husband, but nobody reads only one book. You may end up speaking nothing but English, but if you program then perhaps now may be the time to teach yourself another language.

Software

THE FORTH STAGE-
A GUIDE TO LEARNING (Part 1)
by Ed Crisler (A.L.E.)

I have been programming for about 10 years. I started on the PLATO system and have since worked with almost all of the micros known to man- as well as a few that are not known. I have experience in BASIC, C, COBOL(UGH), TUTOR, FORTRAN and FORTH.

My hope is that through this tutorial I can further my own knowledge of FORTH while I help others.

Lets begin by looking at the program we will be using, ANTIC fig-FORTH. The reason I choose this version of FORTH is that it is widely available and is an excellent FORTH environment.

Let's start with the directory. Standard FORTH format is to use screen 0 as the user index. To view this type '0 list'. (The ' will be used to separate FORTH commands.) You can control the screen with control-1 just like in basic.

The first thing to do is make a working copy with programming space on the disk. Before we begin though lets write our first FORTH programs. Just type in the following lines exactly as they are printed and press return after each.

```
: DIR 0 LIST ;
: DIRP PON DIR POFF ;
: DIRL 0 50 INDEX ;
: DIRLP PON DIRL POFF ;
```

Do not worry about understanding them just yet I'll explain in detail later. Just to let you know DIRP sends screen 0 to the printer, DIRL lists the first line of every screen (this line is commonly used for a comment about the contents of the screen) and I believe that DIRLP is clear after the other explanations. These words are now a permanent part of your FORTH language, well almost. Next type SYS and press return. This loads a menu of disk control functions. Format your work disk and then use MAKEBOOT to copy your version of FORTH to the disk.

You now have a complete working copy of FORTH with our newly defined words as a permanent part.

You should go ahead and print out a copy of the doc screens. This is easiest using the SHOWLP command. The following are the screen numbers I found to be worth getting: 0-1 10-15 17-18 1B-1C 1E-2B. You can change the system to base 10 by using the word DX to return to hex type HX. It is easier to program in hex as you must do a lot of byte manipulation.

While I am going to try to teach you FORTH I do recommend you buy a book on the subject, I personally consider "FORTH: A TEXT AND REFERENCE" by MAHLON G. KELLY and NICHOLAS SPIES to be the best text avaliable. There are others, but this covers all versions of FORTH currently in existence and is fairly recent (c 1986).

This should be enough to get you ready to start learning. There is really a lot to cover and we will be taking it slow so as to be sure you understand each section. If you have any questions just send them to MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, Attention Sally Nagy, and she will get them to me. While your waiting on the next article you might want to play around with FORTH. Try the VLIST command.

I guess its time to end- just remember that to learn FORTH you must make yourself like unto a neophyte or you will dwell in the realm of the
: ? #5 msg forever.

Turbo Basic XL
Review by Mark Dulcey

[The first part of this review is an excerpt from the Turbo Basic Command List, compiled and translated by Dave and Laura Yearke, provided by the Western New York Atari Users Group. It may be reprinted freely provided this credit is included.]

In case you've just landed from Mars, or just plain haven't heard yet, Turbo Basic is the exciting new public domain BASIC interpreter that we received from the Atari Users Group in Holland. It works on the XL or XE series of Atari computers. It's almost too good to be true and should be a definite must for all XE or XL Atari owners.

Turbo Basic, in addition to offering 42 more commands and 22 more functions than Atari BASIC, gives the user 1603 more bytes of program space by "hiding" part of itself under the XL/XE's operating system. It also runs 3 times faster than Atari BASIC, includes most DOS commands, has advanced graphics and programming functions, and is insensitive to lower case or inverse characters for most commands.

TURBO BASIC COMMANDS:

Disk I/O

BLOAD	Binary loads file
BRUN	Binary load and run file
DELETE	Deletes file
DIR	Disk directory
LOCK	Locks file
RENAME	Renames file
UNLOCK	Unlocks file

Graphics

CIRCLE	Plots a circle or ellipse
CLS	Clears the screen.
CLS #6	Clear screen opened in channel 6.
FCOLOR	Determines fill color.
FILLTO	A fill command analogous to XIO 18
PAINT	Fill any closed object it
TEXT	bit-blocks text

Memory

DPOKE	Pokes 2-byte integer
MOVE	Block transfer
-MOVE	Like MOVE but starts with last byte
BPUT	Block put
BGET	Block get
%PUT	Puts number "as is" in 6-byte FP format.
%GET	Get a number stored with %PUT

Structured Programming

REPEAT	Start a REPEAT-UNTIL loop.
UNTIL	Terminate when condition met.
WHILE	Start a WHILE-WEND loop
WEND	Terminate a WHILE-END loop.
ELSE	Optional extension for IF
ENDIF	Ends an IF-ELSE-ENDIF or IF-ELSE condition
DO	Starts an "infinite" DO loop
LOOP	Cycle back to the start of a DO loop
EXIT	Exit a DO-LOOP loop
PROC	Start definition of procedure
ENDPROC	End definition of procedure
EXEC	Execute procedure

General Programming

PAUSE	Pause for n/60 second on US Ataris
RENUM	Renumber the program
DEL	Delete lines
DUMP	Display all variables and values
TRACE	Trace program during execution.
TRACE -	Turns trace mode off (default).
DSOUND	Uses channel-pairing for more range.
DSOUND	Turns off all sounds.
GO TO n	Alternate form of GOTO.
*L	Turn line-indent on/off
*F	FOR loops run 0 times if condition not met
*B	Allows break key to be TRAPped
--	Special REM; puts 30 dashes in listing

Line Labels

#	Assigns current line number to label
GO#	Analogous to the GOTO command.

Modifications

CLOSE	Close channels 1-7.
DIM	Automatically clears array
GET	Wait for key press, assign value to name
INPUT A$;	Prints text before asking for input
LIST n,	List program from line n to end.
ON a EXEC	Variation of ON...GOSUB for procedures
ON a GO#	Similar to ON...GOTO using line labels
POP	Pops stack for all four types of loops
PUT n	Same as "PRINT CHR$(n)";
RESTORE #	Restores the data line indicated by label
RND	Parentheses not needed
SOUND	Turn off all sounds.
TRAP #	TRAPs to the line referenced by label

Arithmetic/Logic

HEX$(n)	Convert n to hex string
DEC(a$)	Convert hex string A$ to decimal
n DIV i	Integer quotient of n/i
n MOD i	Integer remainder of n/i
FRAC(a)	Fractional part of a
TRUNC(a)	Truncates fractional part of a
RAND(n)	Generates random number 0-n
$nnnn	Allows input of hexadecimal numbers
n & i	8-bit boolean AND.
n ! i	8-bit boolean OR.
n EXOR i	8-bit Exclusive-OR.

Memory

DPEEK(m)	Double-PEEK of m,m+1.
TIME	Time of day(numeric).
TIME$	Time of day string, HHMMSS.
INKEY$	Returns last character typed
INSTR	Returns relative location of A$ within X$
UINSTR	Same as INSTR, but ignores case and inverse
ERR	Value of last error number
ERL	Line last error occurred at

Constants

%0, %1, %2, %3 - These four constants stand for the numbers 0-3, but save program space

(Now, my comments.)

Turbo Basic XL is a public-domain BASIC interpreter from Germany. It was written by Frank Ostrowski for the German magazine Happy Computer.

The command summary lists only the new commands of Turbo Basic. Turbo also supports all the commands of Atari BASIC, and will load SAVEd Atari BASIC files. Turbo programs will load into Atari BASIC if none of the new commands are used.

Many of the new commands will be familiar to users of BASIC XL and BASIC XE. Turbo is not identical to either of those languages, however. Some of the new commands have the same syntax, and others differ. Turbo has commands that the OSS BASICs lack (CIRCLE and PAINT, for instance); the OSS languages have commands that Turbo doesn't (player-missile graphics, for one).

Turbo pays no attention to LOMEM; you get the same amount of space no matter what DOS you use. It is incompatible with the 850 RS-232 handler; the BASIC program loads over part of it.

You can also have 256 variables in your program, instead of only 128. Statement labels count as variables.

Since Turbo uses the space under the OS ROM; it will not run on a 400 or 800. It is incompatible with under-the-ROM and under-cartridge DOS systems.

There is also a compiler for Turbo Basic, and it is also public domain! The version currently available has all its prompts in German. An English version will be available soon.

The compiler will handle most BASIC programs. None of the immediate commands (LOAD, SAVE, etc.), will compile; nor will FOR loops with more than one NEXT statement. The compiled code is larger than the BASIC source, so some big BASIC programs can't be compiled.

Turbo Basic XL is an outstanding public-domain program. It offers many of the best features of other extended BASICs, plus a few of its own. It is fully compatibile with Atari BASIC, and very fast. The price is right, too. I recommend it to all XL and XE owners.

Performance:

I tried some simple benchmark programs on various BASICs to compare their speed. Turbo Basic is a very fast BASIC interpreter; it turned in times comparable to BASIC XE. The compiler is even faster.

The BASICs tested were Turbo Basic XL version 1.5, BASIC XE version 4.1 with extensions 4.11, and Atari BASIC Rev. B. Three times are reported for BASIC XE. The FAST time is with the statement 0 FAST added to each program; the SLOW time is without that statement. The BARE time was run without loading the extensions file. (BASIC XL in SLOW mode will be about the same speed as the BARE times for BASIC XE. FAST mode times will be slower than the BASIC XE FAST times. BASIC XL with a FASTCHIP installed will be about as fast as BASIC XE.)

BASIC	1	2	3	4	5
Turbo BASIC XL:	56.0	41.5	58.1	59.4	43.5
Turbo compiler:	54.1	26.7	12.5	12.6	20.7
BASIC XE fast:	61.6	57.1	41.2	43.7	42.5
BASIC XE slow:	61.8	62.2	51.2	5790.0	64.4
BASIC XE bare:	237.0	70.8	97.6	5820.0	83.6
Atari BASIC:	237.8	109.9	163.2	6060.0	104.5

Test 1: Savage 500

This benchmark is a version of the Savage floating-point benchmark. This version was scaled down to 500 iterations (instead of the standard 2500) to stay within my patience limits.

The times on this test are determined almost totally by the speed of the floating-point code. Note the nearly identical times turned in by BASIC XE (without extensions) and Atari BASIC.

Test 2: FOR loop

This one is very simple: a FOR loop that goes around 50,000 times.

```
1 FOR I=1 TO 50000:NEXT I
```

Test 3: GOTO loop

This uses a different sort of loop: a GOTO statement in an IF. This loop goes around 20,000 times.

```
10000 I=0
10010 I=I+1:IF I<20000 THEN 10010
```

Test 4: GOTO loop part 2

This is the same as test 3, except that there are 5000 REM statements added to the beginning of the program. The long times in the table were gotten by looping 200 times and multiplying the run time by 100. This test shows the time spent searching for the line to branch to. The results suggest that Turbo preprocesses line numbers in a manner similar to FAST mode in the OSS BASICs.

Test 5: DISASM.BAS

I ran the program DISASM.BAS, a public-domain disassembler. I disassembled the locations $0711-$087F to the screen.

Atari Technical

130XE/800XL BATTERY BACKUP SYSTEM
SHAREWARE, HARDWARE PLANS
By: Pete Hunter

Ihis Battery Backup system is designed to work with the Atari 130XE, or 800XL computer. If you are running a BBS on an expanded memory Atari, this will allow you to run the message bases in the Ram-Disk without fear of losing them due to those little power "blips" and long outages. The little 10 second power losses are the most frequent cause of heartache to a BBS SysOp.

Well!, fear no more. This hardware project has been several months in the making and testing. I have been using it on my BBS (BBS: EXPRESS!) for about 3 months now and the Great thing about it is you don't even have to open the case on your computer as it requires no alteration to your computer whatsoever.

At first I thought about offering it to Antic, or Analog for a hardware project but then decided to release it as a SHAREWARE type, hardware plan. As you already know, Shareware really isn't Public Domain material. If you use these plans and they work for you, any donation you care to make will be appreciated and might encourage me to design a battery backup for the MIO board by ICD, which would certainly be cheaper than a UPS, transverter type system (about $200.00 or more).

Plans for this Battery Backup are Copyright (c) 1986 by Pete Hunter Auctioneers Inc., 2760 W. Whiteside, Springfield, MO 65807

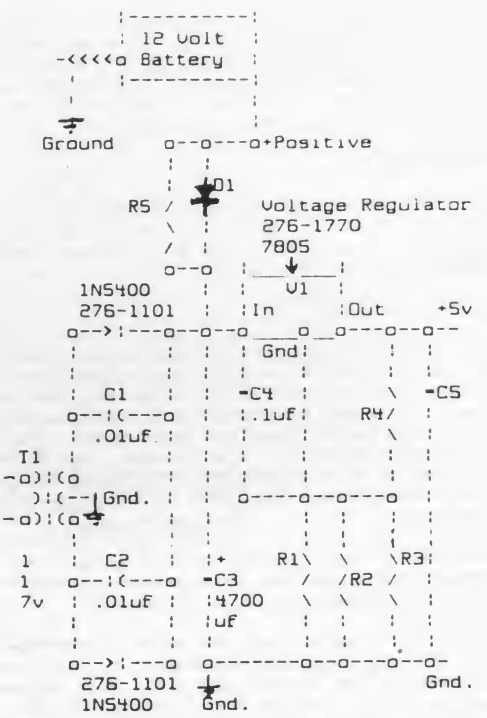
This device can be built for about $25.00 from Radio Shack Parts. The Author accepts no responsibility for them due to inability to control user design techniques and workmanship. Send all inquiries or donations to the above address.

Power Plug connection to computer.

Pin Configuration

```
      7.    .6
    3.        .1
     5.     . 4
        .
        2
```

1. +5 Volts
2. Shield
3. Ground
4. +5 Volts
5. Ground
6. +5 Volts
7. Ground



NOTE: All part numbers given are Radio Shack Part Numbers. Other parts of equal value may be substituted.

Parts List:
T1..Transformer..273-1515..18vct (2A)
V1..276-1770..5v regulator
Heat Sink for above..276-1367
D1,D2,D3..276-1101..1N5400 Diodes
R1,R2,R3..271-1301..10 ohm resistors
R4..271-012..100 ohm resistor
R5..Optional...See text!
C1,C2..272-131..0.01uf capacitors
C3..272-1022..4700uf..35v capacitor
C4,C5..271-135...1uf capacitors

If you can't find a 7 pin, DIN plug like what is on your Atari power supply you can get a 5 pin, DIN plug from Radio Shack..#274-003 for the power plug....

If you use the 5 pin plug be extra careful as it is the same plug that goes into the Monitor Jack. If you plug 5 volts into the Monitor Jack, I am sure you would have problems... so paint the plug red or something like that if you use the 5 pin plug. Any of the terminals that are marked +5 or ground will power the computer. BE EXTRA CAREFUL WHEN HOOKING THEM UP AND OBSERVE PROPER POLARITY...

This power supply can be assembled without a PC board by using a 5 lug, terminal strip. Be extremely cautious as you will have 117 volts present. The two 117v wires on the transformer should be taped and insulated to prevent electrical shock. A PC board and plastic or metal case may be used if desired.

PRECAUTIONS

Some electronic experience is ESSENTIAL to build this project. DON'T attempt it if you don't have experience. Get a friend or someone knowledgeable in this area to help.

GETTING STARTED:

First wire the line cord to the two 117 volt power supply leads on the transformer and insulate them by taping etc. You may also want to put a 1/2 amp fast/blow fuse inline on one side of the power cord for protection. You can tell which side of the transformer to hook the 117v line to because the low voltage side has 3 wires coming from it and the 117v side only has 2 wires.

Assemble the rest of the circuit as per the diagram. Look the circuit over very carefully before starting.

If you use a metal case for your power supply don't let the regulator or heat sink touch it. Some people like to bolt the heat sink to the case for extra cooling but it will cause a short with this particular type of regulator. If extra cooling is needed, either use appropriate heat conductive insulators and bolt it to the case, or bolt it to a piece of scrap aluminium and keep it insulated from the case.

At the top of the diagram you will find "D1" and "R5"...This is the diode that allows the current to flow from the battery to the computer upon power failure. The resistor "R5" is a "BYPASS" "current limiting" resistor to allow the power supply to charge the battery. You may or may not want "Charger" capabilities. If you use a Motorcycle, or Car battery you will probably want to charge it a small amount. A 140 to 150 ohm, 1/2 watt resistor will allow about a 100 milliampere charge rate. A 700 ohm, 1/2 watt resistor would allow about a 20 milliampere charge. In order to determine other charge rates and the proper combination of resistors I suggest you purchase an "Ohms Law Calculator" from Radio Shack for the small price of about 50 cents. It is a small, sliding, cardboard chart similar to a slide rule.

In summation of the charging system: If you don't want to attempt to build it just delete "R5" from the circuit and charge the battery manually, with a separate battery charger. You can insert a DC Amp Meter in series with "R5" to determine the amount of current that is actually going to the battery. The Diode "D1"will only let the current go in one direction which is from the battery to the computer. No voltage will be allowed to go "upstream" from the computer to the battery.

If you use lantern type batteries, they are not designed to be charged so delete "R5" from the circuit should you decide to use this type. I recommend a Motorcycle, Garden Tractor, Car Battery, or Gel Cells be used as these will keep the computer going for several hours. If you use Gel Cells be sure they are at least 5 Amp hour batteries. A 12 Volt battery IS NECESSARY even though we are only ending up with 5 volts to the computer. The 7805 regulator needs at least 3 volts above it's operating voltage to work properly. Thus the 12 volts as 8 volt batteries are in short supply. Anything other than 12 volts are not recommended.

If you have trouble, questions, or suggestions please call me at my BBS in Springfield, MO: The Auctioneer BBS 417/887-4969, or write to me.

Please feel free to share these plans with your friends, or other BBS'. They are intended for plubic distribution and may be shared or distributed freely.

Software

Price Fixing in Mule
by Ralph Fellows (C.H.A.O.S.)

(Although M.U.L.E. is virtually an antique game for the 8 Bit Atari, it remains a favorite. Here is a reprint from an ENERGY Magazine of several years ago, written by C.H.A.O.S.'s then reigning M.U.L.E. expert.)

We have an experienced group of M.U.L.E. players. Each has played dozens of games.

Long ago, four of us decided to see if we could maximize the total output of the colony. One player bought all four river plots and fed the rest: one bought several desert plots and provided all the energy: one bought a few mountains and mined smithore: the fourth player concentrated on crystite. By using collusion to transfer goods cheaply and to make sure the crystite player got all the good crystite plots we ended up with a total worth of about $150,000. But it all seemed a sterile exercise, so we outlawed collusion and discouraged co-operation -- nowadays, it's every man for himself.

Most of our games total out between $55,000 and $85,000, with the winner ending up worth $20,000 to $30,000. But our group recently played an aggressive, cutthroat game that totalled out at $168,000! Here's how we did it.

You may think that it never pays to sell your goods on turn twelve. The Mechtrons certainly never do. And it doesn't make much sense to sell your goods to the store -- what would be the point?

Still, it isn't forbidden to buy or sell on turn twelve. You have to sit through all four auctions anyway, watching the time bars dwindle, until you see the final score. Why, we wondered, did the Bunten brothers (the game designers) bother to include these four dead auctions at the end?

Then it happened. In an otherwise-normal game, the third-place and fourth-place players both finished turn twelve's production with huge surpluses of energy and very little else. Numbers one and two had converted to crystite long ago, so there was almost no energy in play except that numbers three and four had between them.

The smithore, crystite, and food auctions were over, and the energy auction was about to begin. A short discussion occurred between numbers three and four, and number three positioned himself to sell while number four settled on the buy side. When the bidding started, number four ran the price of energy up to $300 or so, and number three sold him one unit just before the gong went off.

When the final results came up, the two energy barons had moved into first and second place! The computer had evaluated their energy at its last sale price!

"Collusion!" cried the other players.
"not true!" came the reply. After all, they hadn't excluded the others from participating in the auction.

This led to a heated argument, which almost broke up the group. What was the point in working hard for twelve turns if shenanigans like this could turn the game on its head on turn twelve?

Cooler heads prevailed, and we continued playing. We soon realized that this trick could be used on other turns. If, for example, there are only three unowned plots left, you may want to artificially inflate the worth of another player's goods to (temporarily) push him into first place -- then he won't be able to get a new plot.

And the trick can be used with other commodities as well. It's particularly effective in crystite, since the price marker moves in $4 increments -- you can bid it up to $750 or so with no effort at all. (that's how we got $168,000 in the game mentioned earlier. The loser ended up worth $29,000!)

What can the other players do to prevent these maneuvers? They must maintain ample supplies of all commodities, so that artificial price increases help them as well as the price fixers, or so that they can exhaust the fixers' cash by dumping the gods at a cheap price.

In a sense, this trick is collusion. It's a form of price fixing by the suppliers -- an oligopoly. You may want to forbid it in your games, since it makes the rest of the game both harder and lower-scoring. But it certainly adds a new dimension to M.U.L.E.!

Industry Report

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CEBIT '87
by CHRISTIAN SCHMITZ-MOORMANN
APRIL 4, 1987

The CEBIT fair at Hanover supposedly is the world's largest show in bureau and information electronics. CEBIT stands for: Computer, Electronics, Bureau, Information and Telecommunication. On an area of more than 205,000 square meters in 12 halls more than 2200 firms showed their products. This report is intended to give you an idea of what is happening in ATARI's stronghold. ATARI has sold over 120,000 STs (all models) in Germany alone. ATARI Germany has made up for almost 30% of ATARI's sales in 1986.

HARDWARE...

ATARI presented itself in its newly adopted white-and-blue look and on 50 1040s the software-houses presented their new products.

Before looking at the software I was pulled to the new MEGA-STs and that experience was great. The design was appealing and the keyboard a lot better than my 1040's. Alas, the MEGAs won't hit the stores before May or even June due to a slight timing- problem with the shifter-chip. This error results in small vertical black lines on the display. The delay in the MEGAs will probably also affect the PC since ATARI said they would only put out the PC after the MEGAs to show their preferences. But with Jack Tramiel one never can be certain. The last all

new product was the laser printer. Connected to one of the MEGAs, it was turning out page after page.

PRINT-TECHNIK presented its 3rd- generation digitizers. Their new Realtizer digitizes a picture with up to 16 gray-levels in less than one second. It now plugs into the ROM-port. Its big brother, the PRO 87, digitizes 1024 pixels in 512 lines and 128 gray-levels. Both digitizers come with a toolbox-software and the PRO 87 also includes the necessary hardware for real-color images. PRINT-TECHNIK also offers a Genlock-interface for the ST.

GTI, a Berlin-based society, presented a VMEbus-interface that plugs into the DMA-port and includes a full bus-arbitration-logic and supports interrupts. The DMA-port is pulled through so that a hard-disk can still be used.

Another bus that opens your ATARI is produced by RHOTRON. It is plugged onto the CPU and has eight slots. Since installing the bus voids the warranty RHOTRON also offers a PC-like case in which the ST and the bus and a stronger power supply are incorporated. Rhotron offers several cards to fill the slots, from 2-Meg RAM to multifunction-cards they have just about everything, or how about a math- coprocessor?

LINDY, a maker of printer-cables and other computer add-ons also presented an oscillograph. It can be used as a sound-sampler or as a digital oscillo scope.

LANGUAGES AND BUSINESS SOFTWARE

Although there are many already, even more languages are offered for the ST. Some people even say that there is no other computer with more different languages available -- languages not only for developers.

Again, HEIM-Verlag has something for us. It is a powerful version of PROLOG that also supports GEM. The package consists of a compiler/interpreter system with around 140 functions. It is called SALIX-PROLOG and costs around $120.

More sophisticated is MProlog by Berlin-based Epsilon. MProlog is also available on other computers like VAX, Macintosh, IBM etc. It costs around $500 (?), and is designed for professional use.

Three different BASIC systems were shown. First there was GfA who showed version 2.0 of their interpreter and the almost final version 1.71 of their compiler. Frank Ostrowski, the author of GfA-BASIC is now busy writing a GfA-macro-assembler, lets wait and see. GfA will be represented in the US by MICHTRON.

The second BASIC shown was OMIKRON- BASIC which comes on a plug-in board for the ROM-port. It is even faster than GfA-BASIC in most functions, it calculates up to 19 decimals, supports matrices and a C-standard GEM-interface. It is MBASIC-compatible and there only is one problem. By the time it was published, most people had already bought GfA-BASIC.

The third newcomer has another nice feature. True-BASIC is available for ATARI, IBM, AMIGA and MAC and between these it is fully portable. Like OMIKRON it offers matrices and it supports the full new ANSI-standard. It also has a special library for 3-D graphics.

BUSINESS...

A database was presented by ATARI itself. ADIMENS-ST is fully GEM- integrated (well almost), extremly fast, powerful and a high-quality product. To bad it still lacks a programming language, which for me as a developer is indispensable. ATARI said it is underway, though, and should be available by July.

A real goody was a piece of integrated software which was presented by a Yugoslavian firm. Its name is 'STEVE' and it is the most flexible spreadsheet I've seen, yet. One can do everything and nothing with it. It can be used as a spread-sheet naturally, a database, text-editor, graphic editor and mailing list facility. It allows user-definable function keys, two keyboard-tables, several fonts, abbreviations and dictionary in the text-editor and more. The program will retail in Germany for around DM 250, which is about $110, but that was the maximum price. I'm waiting for this program!

WORD PROCESSORS & TOOLS

CEBIT '87 had plenty of Atari word processors to offer. DATA-Becker (their products are sold by ABACUS in the US) presented their new BECKER-text, the new version of TEXTOMAT ST (TEXTPRO). There are no more control-codes in the text (WYSIWYG) and it features an indexing function as well as an automatic table of contents. Graphics can be included and computation and tables are incorporated.

Again, ATARI offered an alternative to the just described program. I'm talking about the finally released '1st Word Plus'. This program cures most of the errors and oddities of the original 1st Word and adds some nice new features as well. It is going to be really difficult to make a choice between 1st Word Plus and BECKER-text since both have nice features the competitor does not have and as well there are still wishes I have for both.

A third text-editor which was not on the show, but has caused a lot of noise is SIGNUM! which is retailed by Application Systems in Heidelberg. SIGNUM! stands somewhere between a word-processor and a Desktop Publishing system. It allows up to seven fonts of 128 characters each at the same time. A character can be just about everything and an editor to create new character-sets is included. SIGNUM! offers macros and very powerful placing utilities. A reviewer called it a calligraphy-system. (Calligraphy is the art of embellishing writing).

TOOLS

G-DATA, based in Dusseldorf, has been known over here for its quality utility software. They have improved some of their old programs and added new ones including a program to make a Hard disk capable of auto-booting and several programs to make backups of a hard disk which has some nice features including data-compression, and file size of more than disk size.

The most powerful tool for disk-repair and editing is T.L.D.U. by FOCUS. This firm has made disk-monitors for years. T.L.D.U. is fully programmable and the disk comes with some example-macros which offer a good way to learn the necessary commands. The programming language is very C-like. The current release does not read or write some copy-protected disks, but an update has been promised for June. T.L.D.U. also includes a disassembler and an extensive manual.

CAD GRAPHICS & MIDI SOFTWARE

Harm-Bastian (HABA), which resides in Hamburg, has released its HABACAD-PL layout program. The program addresses only professional hardware-developers and the price of DM3000 ($1200) seems rather hefty. No GEM support, but powerful routing routines.

Only for color monitors are the two Director programs ART DIRECTOR and FILM DIRECTOR by ANDROMEDA. This Hungarian firm has always been good for terrific programs and these two programs are among their best. The ART DIRECTOR is a drawing and painting program, but it offers most unusual features and is very flexible. The FILM DIRECTOR could be described as a slide-show program. But it is much more. Objects that have been created using the ART DIRECTOR are put together in several thousand frames, a background and music can be added and you have made your first animation- picture.

If you have the breath, it can take up to three hours. The directors import all kind of other graphic formats and when you add a video-digitizer there is no limit to your imagination.

SOUND

MUSIX 32, already in aan enhaced version, allows programmers to add sound and music to their programs, which is played in background and interrupt-driven. Besides putting in the score it is possible to define the dynamics, the soundd-wave and o perform transformations. Once you are done you can make a printout and incorporate the music in any C-, Pascal, or GfA- program. Other languages can also be used. MUSIX 32 has been created by the famous team of TOMMYSOFTWARE.

If you are interested in synthesizers and own an ATARI you won't get around STEINBERG. This firm has prroduced software nd hardware already in the days of Commodore 64, but their ATARI programs and add-ons are first- rate. They offer everything from a sequencer (TWENTY-FOUR 2.0) to score-printing programs (MASTERSCORE), editing kits (pro16+) and their SOUND WORKS series, powerful tools for several synthesizers which help in designing new sounds, editing and mixing samples and much more.

ST Technical

BOOT ORDER AND FILE SORTING ON THE ST
by John Stanley
Software Consultant - DynaSoft Systems
(Condensed from a message chain on BITNET)

The Gem Desktop utility sorts the displayed file lists into on of four different sorting orders. There is no (known to me) way to shut off the sorting. In most cases, none of the sortings display the real order that the files lie on the disk. The AUTO folder contains programs that are run at boot-up time. The AUTO programs are run in "real" file order, not any of the sorted orderings...

This means that unless you are careful, you will have no control over which boot programs are run first, 2nd,... last... Worse, the order in which the files were written to the folder will not neccessarily be the physical order! If the folder had files in it, you went in and deleted one of them, and then added a file, the new file will probably take the place of the old file in the file-sequence.

You CAN get control of the physical layout of files in a folder, and thus set up the order of execution. The "trick" is that while files in an open folder (where the directory is displayed) when copied end up in the sorted order, when you copy a closed folder, the files end up in the same order they're "really" in because the desktop doesn't sort the contents of a closed folder....

The method I use to reorganize a folder is:

1) Create a new empty folder on my ramdisk with the name of the folder I want to replace.
2) Leave the ramdisk folder closed...
3) Open the original folder.
4) Copy the files ONE-AT-A-TIME into the closed ram-folder
5) Delete the original folder
6) Click and drag the CLOSED(!) ramfolder to it's new home.

(Many people don't quite understand how the ordering of files in an AUTO folder really works... Those that do often forget (or never knew) that when you drag a CLOSED folder, the files end up in the same "real" order as they were in the original...)

HEY ATARI! Any chance we can get an addition to the new (coming "real-soon-now") desktop for a 5th sorting option? Namely -un-sorted.... This would take a -very- small change in the desktop code, would take almost no extra code space (one new line on the menu bar and about 10 lines of code), and it would go a long way towards solving the Auto folder problems that many people are having...

Review

One Meg Memory Upgrades
For the ATARI 520ST
Posted on CompuServe, Source not Credited

Over the months I have collected information on three memory expansion boards for the ST, prior to purchasing one for my own use. Each has its strong points, as discussed below. Hopefully, this will help you to make a more informed decision when you decide to expand your 520ST. The three boards to be reviewed are from ThoughtSpace, AERCO, and Terrific Peripherals. All provide utilities on disk for checking your memory upgrade after installation.

THOUGHTSPACE DOUBLETHINK (TS1A) - Without a doubt, this is the most professionally promoted and detailed memory expansion of the three discussed here. All requests for information were promptly answered and neatly typewritten. For $1.00 they will send you a copy of their 25 page installation guide. Installation requires removal of two IC's and several resistors, as well as cutting of selected circuit traces. The instructions are detailed and well illustrated. This is not for amateurs. The board then installs in the desoldered holes left from the IC's removal. This is a direct link to the motherboard, unlike the other expansion kits, which use ribbon cables. The memory board sits approximately in the same area as the space bar on the keyboard, completely under the RF shield. The idea is to leave plenty of space for the blitter chip, RF modulator and other add-ons which may be provided at a later date by Atari.

ThoughtSpace claims that their board results in a system which is electronically identical to the 1040ST. For an additional $20, ThoughtSpace will install the expansion board for you. ThoughtSpace retails for $165. Doublethink has a 1 year warranty. ThoughtSpace Development's address is 2450 Warring St., No.21, Berkeley, CA, 94704. Phone:(415)845-1415.

AERCO easiST - This is the most flexible board in terms of future memory upgrades. The basic board supplies an additional 512K RAM for the ST, with room for up to 4 megabytes total memory. 2.5 meg of memory can be installed without modification to the board other than adding 16 1 meg RAM chips and sockets. Upgrades to 4 megabytes requires some soldering and cutting on the expansion board. Since 1 meg chips are approximately $30 for the general public, upgrading past 1 meg is currently a very expensive option. Hopefully by next year the price of chips will have dropped to around $5 or so.

Promotional materials for the AERCO board are professional, though not as detailed as ThoughtSpace. The eight page installation guide is concise and clearly illustrated. Installation requires removal of the MMU chip. This is the trickiest part of the procedure, since you need two jeweler's type precision screwdrivers to pry the chip out of its socket. If you're not careful, you can crack the socket and/or the chip. The MMU chip is reinstalled in a special MMU adapter socket, which is then plugged into the MMU socket on the motherboard. Two pressure-type pin connectors install over two data buffer chips. While the MMU connector is very solid, the pin connectors appear less so. AERCO provides a special string for tying around the connectors to strengthen the fit, though they suggest that it is not necessary for dependable use. Ribbon-type cables run from the connectors to the expansion board. The board sits on the upper left corner of the motherboard, under the RF shield. One major advantage of this installation is that if you should develop problems with the expansion board or chips in the future, you can easily deinstall the board and still have a working computer while the board is being repaired.

A note of caution: the board covers ROM chip number 1, which is the installation point for the some clock chips. Both the memory board and clock chip will not fit under the RF shield. Terrific Peripherals sells a cable

adapter which is designed to relocate ROM number 1 and allow simultaneous use of both the memory expansion and clock. TP originally designed the cable to be used in the 1040ST, with their clock chip, since ROM number 1 on the 1040 is under the power supply.

List price for the AERCO board is $189. For an additional $20, they will preinstall 20 more sockets which will simplify future upgrades to 2.5 megabits. If just the thought of opening the case of your ST gives you the shivers, AERCO will install the board for a fee of $25. AERCO supports a 1 year warranty. AERCO's address is Box 18093, Austin, TX 78760. Phone:(512)451-5874.

TERRIFIC PERIPHERALS EZ-RAM - TP says they've sold thousands of their boards over the last year. They were one of the first on the market. Installation is the easiest of the three. A special MMU socket adapter connects directly to the socket on the motherboard without removal of the MMU chip. A ribbon cable connects to the memory expansion board. The video chip is removed from the motherboard and reinstalled on the EZ-RAM board. Instructions are printed on a single large page which folds out to cover your work area while you follow the easy to read diagrams and notes. The illustrations are clear and professionally drawn. EZ-RAM sits over the video chip socket under the RF shield. This leaves room for other add-ons later, such as the blitter chip or RF modulator. The video chip sits in its own RF "box", approximately under the arrow keys on the keyboard, prior to installation of the memory expansion. The top of the box is replaced by the expansion board. TP says that they have not had any problems with RF interference due to removal of the shield top and relocation of the video chip. EZ-RAM has a 6 month warranty and retails for $199. Terrific Peripherals' address is 17 St. Mary's Court, Brookline MA, 02146. Phone: (617)-232-2317.

SO WHICH ONE DID I BUY? - I bought the AERCO board and installed it in approximately an hour. It would have taken less time, but I fiddled around trying to get the Z-Time clock chip to fit as well. AERCO has started using an improved MMU adapter which made installation fairly painless. I'm not expert enough to attempt the ThoughtSpace installation and I'm unwilling to give up my ST for even a few days. I have few doubts that I'll want to upgrade to 2.5 Meg when it's more economical - simply because it's there. As for installation approach, the AERCO board appears to be a reasonable compromise between the more complex DoubleThink and the simple EZ-RAM, in terms of how one plugs into the necessary data lines to provide the additional memory. The 1 year warranty is also a big plus for me.

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A ZIX BY ANY OTHER NAME
by Brian Goluszix (C.H.A.O.S.Z.I.X.)

Along with the "look and feel" lawsuits, there is a movement afoot to claim parts of the English language. Specifically, it seems that the prefix "Mac" may soon be reserved as the property of a certain corporation. So if you sell a chair that is made to fit perfectly with the MacIntosh, you will not be able to call it a MacChair. Either license the "Mac" prefix, or you're stuck for a name.

The obvious way to avoid this legal problem is to substitute a "public domain" syllable. For example, substitute "Zix" for "Mac" or "ST". So my ST-Utterings column can become ZIX-Utterings, and your MacChair can become ZixChair. I hereby donate the word "Zix" to the public domain. Feel free to develop products like ZixThink, ZixPray, ZixEulogy, and Pan-Galactic Integrated Zix.

Of course, it will be confusing to use the "Zix" word for every product. If you're in the local computer boutique, and see ZixColor on the shelf, how will you know whether it's for the Amiga, Mac, ST, or the IBM? (Oh, I'm sorry, how will you know whether it's for the Zix, Zix, Zix, or the Zix?)

And will there be any confusion when you go to ZixDonald's, to order a Big Zix? Or for breakfast, an EggZixMuffin? A ZixZLT? Perhaps ZixDonald's could file a counter claim for the "Mac" word, using a "sound and sense" defense to counter "look and feel".

Shakespeare has no chance to bid for the "Mac" word, so it's ZixBeth from now on. Likewise, "When the shark bites . . ." you know that ZixHeath's back in town. And how long will it take Johnny to get used to trading jokes with Ed ZixMan? It only takes a few seconds for a good word processor to replace any privately claimed words with Zix, but what about all the previously published materials? Being from Michigan, I have sympathy for the map makers, as they make new issues for ZixInac Island and the ZixInac bridge.

As the claiming of words grows, the use of Zix will spread beyond the "Mac" word. Prime products that might require word protection are the spreadsheet "123", and the "Star" of WordStar. No problem with Zix. We can count "Zix, zix, zix, four". Or "four, zix, zix, zix, liftoff", if we're launching rockets. "Zix light, zix bright, first zix I see tonight" is certainly as poetic as the original.

Eventually, since we'll avoid claimed words, we will all talk like Smurfs (I'm sorry, Zix'es). I'll zix a new zix-processing zix for my zix system with 2 zix of ram and a 60 zix hard zix. But this is not so zix, and I'll zix a song in my zix:

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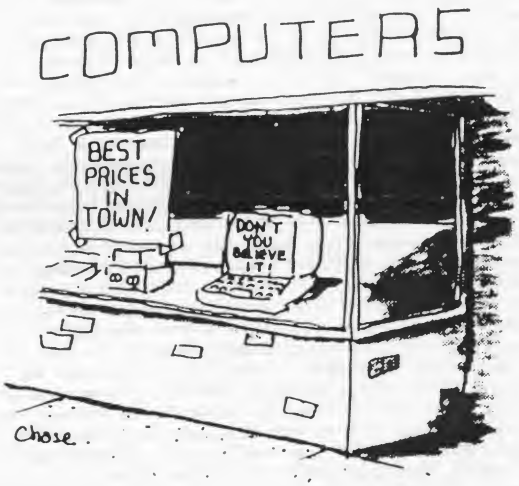

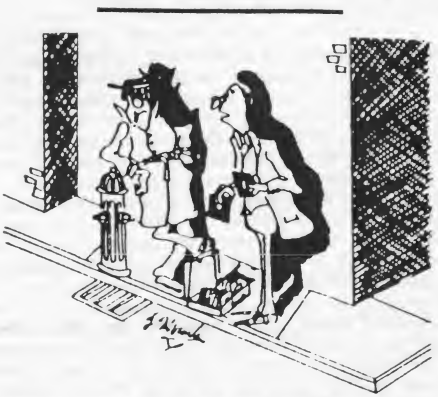

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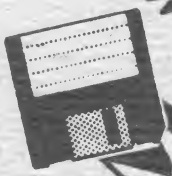

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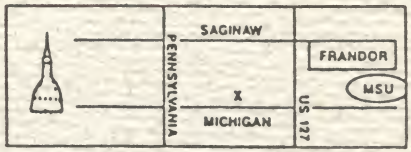

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Atari News

...AND COMMENT!
Compiled by John Nagy

8-BIT EMULATOR FOR THE ST TO BE RELEASED- WITH ATARI's APPROVAL! Hot news! DAREK MIHOCKA has been given the green light for publishing and distributing his "ST TRANSFORMER". Details inside this issue of M.A.M.!

The BUFFALO ATARIFEST at the end of April seemed down in attendance and involvement of vendors. Twenty-nine "vendor" areas included about seven user groups, with some notables as HYBRID ARTS not attending. ATARI didn't bring a MEGA ST to show, but they DID bring the LASER PRINTER prototype. Organizers are upset with ATARI over ads and money. It seems that ATARI (finally) placed a major set of ads ONE WEEK before the show in the Buffalo area, but included the WRONG DATE and WRONG USER GROUP names.... they corrected that in a FRIDAY (day before show) ad that also included a line from some other ATARIFEST: "Children 12 and under FREE ADMIT". The sponsors (WESTERN NEW YORK ATARI USER GROUP and others) figure their losses at $500 as a result. It was also reported that ATARI promised $4,000.00 in support money that has still (at this writing) not shown up. ATARI may be trying to get "out from under" their commitment to more ATARIFESTS, as their enthusiasm wanes.

Other promises made at the BUFFALO FEST: "ALL" THE NEW AND ANNOUNCED PRODUCTS OF ATARI SHOULD BE ON THE MARKET BY THE END OF JUNE. Anybody taking odds on this? Atari will also "make an 8-bit disk drive announcement" at the Consumer Electronics show in June, says Neil Harris.

ATARI's "promise without performance" of money for support is what made DETROIT's M.A.C.E. club cancel their ATARIFEST. Word now is that the MAGIC club in Detroit has progressed with their plans and that there WILL be a THREE-DAY Detroit ATARIFEST in AUGUST. Details are INSIDE this issue of MAM.

ATARI is making big strides on GEnie, a telecomputing service similar to Compuserve. Neil Harris and others from ATARI make appearances regularly in the message bases and sometimes in weekly ROUNDTABLE open discussions. ATARI users are invited to get an $18 saving on normal registration on GEnie (but NO MANUAL) by calling 1-800-638-8369 (with their modem), and entering HHH upon connection. At the U#= prompt, enter XJM11887,ATARI and press return. (The voice number we gave you before got you to people who usually didn't know or wouldn't tell you about the ATARI offer!)

REMEMBER ZMAG? Compuserve users may have to either REMEMBER or else look elsewhere, because RON KOVACS, editor of the popular free weekly online magazine, MAY no longer be using COMPUSERVE in his distribution to over 200 ATARI BBS's worldwide. On the other hand, ZMAG MAY soon be featured bigger than EVER on CIS. HUH? Sysops at the ATARI SIG on CIS have repeatedly objected to items in ZMAG, including coverage of the 8-bit emulator. Then, Ron got demands to edit out any references to GEnie and ATARI's involvement there. The last straw came when Ron tried to include information about other places ZMAG is available and COMPUSERVE refused to post it. Business may be business, but Ron says that it's NOT NEWS if it's censored, so BYE BYE CIS. Now, ATARI SIG manager RON LUKS is apologizing to RON and trying to offer Ron a reason to stay. Now what? Film at 11. ZMAG continues on GEnie, DELPHI, and other services. You can call Ron's BBS system to find your nearest ZMAG outlet (or to become one!) at 201-968-8148 (NEW JERSEY).

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M.A.M. this Month

Editor: Richard Barnes (517) 349-0513

Inside MAM: THE CLUBS-

	PAGE
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	8
G.A.G. (FLINT)	10
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	11
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	12
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	13
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	15

FEATURES:

	COVER
ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT	4
SWAP and SHOP Unclassified ads	17
ST TRANSFORMER APPROVED	18
Buffalo ATARIFEST Review	18
Detroit ATARIFEST Preview	19
ST NOTES - Tips!	20
RAMBRANDT - Review	21
Computer Quiz	22
FORTH STAGE - Learning guide	23
MIDITALK - PRO-24 Sequencer	24
DATARETRIEVE Review	24
ST STAR TREK GAME PREVIEW	25
GIST SOUND Review	26
KORONIS RIFT Review	27
GEM For the 8-bit	28
ATARI XEP-80 Review	29
ST ERROR CODES Explained	30
LAST HACKS - Sgt. Pepper's 8-bit	30

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

This month's issue of MAM is a bit smaller than it has been, but our feature section is as large as usual. What is missing is LOCAL INFORMATION from several clubs, while others are reduced from normal quantities. Also, we had very few ADS this month, although most clubs are expecting that to pick up next month, with a corresponding increase in the total pages we can bring you, and a DECREASE in the costs to the contributing club. We rebate 40% of all ad revenue to the club that maintains each ad, so if YOU think you could help contact potential advertisers (particularly NATIONALs), talk to your club officers RIGHT AWAY. You will see a bigger magazine and a healthier club for your effort!

We are printing FEATURE MATERIAL at an ever-increasing rate, so we DO NEED your articles too!

* * *

From the nearly 100 exchange club newsletters I read each month, plus conversations with officers of our member clubs, it appears that we are seeing a nationwide downturn in ATARI CLUB membership.

Several BIG clubs have reported being litterally ON THE ROCKS, having their costs of operation exceed their income due to sagging membership renewals. In OREGON, the PORTLAND ATARI CLUB are panicy due to competing ST-ONLY clubs eating their members away. PAC went from 640 to 508 members in two months... and is now trying to get into the ST game... late. Some other clubs are also finding that their earlier decisions to ignore or back burner ST support are coming back to haunt them.

Elsewhere, the JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP is having financial problems resulting in a cost cut in their newsletter. In the club I attend, CHAOS in LANSING, the 8-bit group seems to lose 2 people for each one that moves to the ST side. Overall shrinkage is reported from all over.

We can continue to blame this on good weather interfering with well-intentioned would-be attendees, or we can face the fact that ATARI owners aren't as devout as they used to be. Maybe not as plentiful either. OK, CERTAINLY not as plentiful.

As new software releases for the 8-bit machines dwindle away, overall interest has waned in the users as well. They use the machine less and stop coming to meetings and don't renew (or consider joining) their clubs. Some buy an ST,

others buy the "other" brand, still others buy an exercise bike.

HEY!!! THAT'S BACKWARDS!!! As the OUTSIDE support drops, the INSIDE support becomes MUCH MORE VALUABLE. Each month, many new and old programs are demoed at club meetings, and are available in the club libraries. Some clubs have libraries so large and well organized that you could run a new program every day for the next FIVE YEARS and never hit a re-run. And these programs are often of full professional and commercial quality, at a cost next to nothing. SO WHY DROP OUT NOW? IT'S TIME TO GET IN WITH BOTH FEET. Demand that you club officers keep up with new library material- it's readily available for trade or purchase (or even rent!) from other clubs, and can make the difference in whether it's worth keeping the old machine plugged in.

There's more in programs and information available in the public domain than anywhere else. Get involved with YOUR club libraries NOW, while there is still time. It might also make your club stronger for everyone.

NOW... INTRODUCING
A NEW FEATURE OF M.A.M...
FREE UNCLASSIFIED ADS!

SWAP and SHOP
CLASSIFIEDS

Thanks to a suggestion from Leroy Valley (T.A.G.), we are beginning a classified section of ads from and for our readers. There will be no charge for personal ads. If you have an item or items for sale, please contact your clubs editor or you may submit your ad directly to Michigan Atari Magazine. The deadline for receiving above materials for publication in the next issue will be the 20th. of each preceeding month. Be sure to enclose your name, area code and telephone number.

CLUB -
C.H.A.O.S. Club-
256K UPGRADE - RamMaster 256K upgrade kit for 800XL. $25.00 without RAM Chips. $50.00 with RAM chips. Contact: John Nagy (517) 487-5646.

288K UPGRADE - 288K Upgrade kit for original Atari 800, includes Chips, RAM and Docs. $35.00 Complete. Contact: John Nagy (517) 487-5646

DUAL DISK DRIVE - Dual 5.25 inch double sided slave disk drives in a single housing with power supply. Will require additional Percom Master, ATR or IBM-Type System Card for a controller. Perfect for BBS, etc., near 1 meg. of storage. $175.00. Contact John Nagy (517) 487-5646.

PERSONALS -
MODEM - Anchor Automation Volksmodem 12. 300/1200 Baud, auto answer, auto dial. Both Atari 850 and ST cable included. $100.00 firm. Contact: Leroy Valley (517) 686-6796

DISK DRIVE - Percom Master Disk Drive (5.25 Double Density), includes printer interface and cable for any standard printer. Will also control Slave Drives. Like New. $150.00. Contact: John Nagy (517) 487-5646.

800 XL - Atari 800 XL in perfect operating condition. No modifications have been made on this unit. $65.00. Contact: Richard Barnes (517) 349-0513.

1027 Printer - Atari 1027 Printer in excellent condition. Worth the price, just to see it work. Will not support graphics. $65.00. Contact: Richard Barnes (517) 349-0515.

1020 Printer - Atari 1020 Printer/Plotter in excellent condition. $25.00. Contact: Richard Barnes (517) 349-0513.

JOYSTICKS - 2 new ATARI joysticks, in box, the pair for $10. Not used. Contact Guy Hurt, (517) 484-7675.

130XE with 320K - $125. "Plain" original ATARI 800, $50. ATR8000 setup with interface, printer buffer, double sided double density disk drive, case and power supply (all to operate with ATARI 8-bit computer), $300 or offer. Call Leo Sell, (517) 349-0404.

REMEMBER, CLASSIFIED ADS ARE FREE FOR ANY MAM CLUB MEMBER. GET YOUR AD TO YOUR CLUB OFFICERS TODAY!

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at 517-371-1106. 300/1200 baud, 24 hours a day (ATASCII/ASCII).

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
P.O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasur.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr.	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
XL/XE Librian.	Bill Johnson	675-7166
Publ. Librarn.	Richard Evans	351-2381
ST Publ. Libr.	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Cor.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coordn.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

President's Corner
by Leo Sell

Well, I'm scared!!! Over the past few months attendance has been down dramatically at the monthly SIG meetings. Because of the summery weather, both the 16-bit and the 8-bit SIGS are sparsely attended. Just in case you've forgotten, we do meet all year round. So, we hope to see you at one meeting or another.

If you can't attend a meeting, you can still take advantage of much of what CHAOS has to offer. Michigan Atari Magazine comes to your door. The library is available through mail order. Special arrangements can be made with the Publications Librarian if you would like to borrow printed material.

Take a look at the big library listing we mailed out a couple of months ago. There is certainly something there that you would like to have. And don't forget, the Chaos disks are now double-sided!!! We have always given high value for your dollar, now the value is doubled. When you order, be sure to mail your order to the

correct Post Office box. The one shown on the order form should be Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

Chaos is at a serious juncture in its life. We are experiencing the pains of shrinking. Our treasury is dangerously low, our attendance is also. We have a serious lack of volunteers, for positions which, if they were filled, could help us grow and prosper. And frankly, the list keeps growing. Here it is again, call and volunteer:

Publicity Manager
Advertising Manager
Publications Librarian
Newsletter Editor
Assistant Disk Librarians

There are lots of members out there that are capable of helping in these areas. We hope to hear from you.

I would also like to continue to encourage you to let us know how we can better serve the membership. What can we do to encourage you to attend meetings and support the club? Of course, with suggestions you might also offer assistance. C.H.A.O.S. is your Atari resource. Help make it work.

Telecom

THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
By JOHN NAGY

Another month, another change. JOHN LEWIS will be taking over from JOHN BAKER as 8-bit BBS LIBRARIAN. JOHN BAKER will concentrate on ST material online. Look for a split in file handling and message bases to keep things organized. (Get them organized?)

GUY HURT is also joining us for a trivial/quiz game on our FUN AND GAMES base. Rules are both in the messages and in a file online. PLUS, scattered in with the quiz are JOKES. Call us and see what's there, and add your own gems. If they are not in good taste, lets see that they at least taste good. The new "PAGE STOP" feature in the message bases makes the QUESTION/stop/ANSWER format quite enjoyable for RIDDLES.

Look for an ONLINE ZMAG-READER, menu driven to allow examination of any part of the popular BBS magazine put out by RON KOVACS of NEW JERSEY. We are proud to be regular contributers to ZMAG, helping both in content and, when we can, politically (SEE RELATED STORY ON FROM COVER!). The new system (when I get it done) will show the contents of any ZMAG online, and allow you to start reading at any article within the magazine you like. This should help, as many ZMAGS have been over 250 sectors, running nearly a half hour if you read all of it at 300 baud... a long wait if what you wanted was at the end!

We asked our users about their actions and intentions about ST vs 8-bit... and found quite a cross section. 13% DON't have an ATARI at all, with the remainder split right down the middle between OWNING (or planning to own) AN ST, and NOT PLANNING ON MOVING OUT OF THE 8-BIT ATARI. Among those from the ST side, just under half of the respondants HAVE the ST now, the remainder planning it in the immediate future. Accordingly, we will do our best at the CHAOS BBS to continue to support both machines in as much balance as possible. Next, we will look into the number of our users with GRAPHICS, COLOR, WIDE SCREEN, etc. capabilities, and will make adjustments there for more versatility, based on what we find out. Thanks for your input!

Till next month, SEE YA IN CHAT! The CHAOS BBS, (517) 371-1106

Disk Library

The Library Table
By: John Baker (C.H.A.O.S.)

Once again, it's time for an update on the library and BBS status. Time slips by all too quickly it seems. Anyway, there are changes in the works for the library and the BBS. The changes help alleviate one of the problems that have been plaguing me of late. The problem I speak of is "Too many hats, and not enough time."

John Lewis has agreed to take over the 8-bit files section on the BBS. The actual library itself will also have new faces in different areas. Bill Johnson will be the new 8-bit librarian and should have things well under control by the June meeting. Sally Nagy replaces Scott Evans as the ST librarian. Scott will be moving away after college completion this month. I want to thank Scott for his help in the ST section.

"What about new files?", you ask. Hopefully Bill will be situated enough by the June 8-bit meeting to have available several new disks that have been put together from recent trades. Sally has been working diligently in ST files acquisition. Look forward to some GOOD stuff at the next meetings.

Looking to build or increase your personal or club library? We are now offering to rent our

entire library to clubs or individuals. Receive everything shown in our latest 40 page catalog for only $75.00 (plus security deposit). Copy it all onto your own media, and return our original disks to us. Upon receipt of our disks we will return your security deposit. I can think of no better way to obtain this magnitude of first class software for this small of an investment. If you are interested please contact us.

That should about do it for this month. See you at the meetings...

Meeting Minutes

MAY ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions. Spring fever and good weather have arrived, and only 16 people came inside from a beautiful day for the ST meeting. Scott Evans has also turned the ST disk library over to Sally Nagy, since Scott will be out of town for the summer. On the plus side, CHAOS now has a MONITOR MASTER, from Practical Solutions, to allow ST composite output to go to the overhead video system without a VCR in between. The MONITOR MASTER weighs less than a pound, quite an improvement over a 20 pound VCR. Unfortunately, only an RF equipped ST will work with MM to give composite output, despite the fact that the RF jack is itself not used. So we will still have to be careful to get a newer ST to the meeting.

During the meeting, Sally Nagy showed 3 picture disks, 2 from the ST library, and 1 for future inclusion in the library. These disks all use the "tiny" format, which gets more pictures on a disk than DEGAS or NEO do (through compression). Subjects range from humor to art to "color cycle" animation. Peter Miller tried out the EDT/VMS editor from the library, which is apparently identical to the widespread EDT editor that runs on VAX minicomputers. Chet Kapusinski tried Wheel of Fortune, also public domain in the library, and had fun with the disk (which also has 2 other games), despite the fact that an onlooker kept guessing the answers. In the purchased software category, PHANTASIE II was demo'd, a graphics adventure game that's been ported from 8-bit machines. Except ported is too weak a word, since PHANTASIE II uses GEM menus and displays, and has ST improved graphics.

Don't STop coming to meetings just because it's summer, or we'll have to have STormy SaTurdays.

Seretary / Treasurer's Report
By Gary Ferris

May provided us with another fine weather weekend to compete with. Special thanks to all the people who showed.

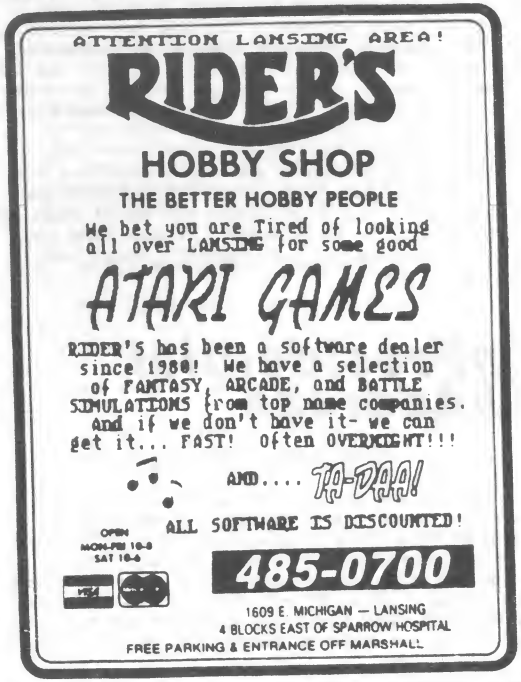
The free for all discussion began with a report on the progress so far on the 8-bit emulator for the ST and Atari's hardnosed attitude in trying to prevent it's release. Also discussed was the prospects of more game software for the 8 bits due to the repackaging of the XE as a game machine (less keyboard). It was also noted that with the recent price increases on 8-bit hardware, it is now possible to get an ST system for about the same cost as an XE system.

Jerry Cross from the Flint group gave a report on the Buffalo Atari show. The progress on the Detroit Atari show is reported to be slow although it was mentioned that there should be an excellent MIDI demonstration.

Speaking of MIDI, we were treated to an excellent demo of the ST's MIDI capabilities by Mitch Wells of Elderly Instruments.

John Baker continued the tradition with another great Disk of the Month .

The treasury has been hit with the double whammy of low attendance the last couple of months and a large invesment in disks for the library. The balance is a much lower than normal $515.39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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING: The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

July 11th at 2:00 pm.
August 8th at 2:00 pm.

*** NOTICE - NO JUNE MEETING! ***

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk Lib.	790-1980
Lance Middleton	ST Disk Librarian	
Ron Hoffman	Assistant ST Disk Lib.	

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

If you look closely at the dates of the next two meetings, you'll see that a June meeting is missing. Due to a combination of my not being able to attend the June meeting, and the decreased attendance during the summer months, the members present voted not to have a June meeting. June's topic has been moved to July, and I look forward to seeing all of you there.

June is our normal month to hold elections, and many members said that since we were skipping the meeting, the present officers were stuck for another year. Wellll.....that's not the way it's done! We will hold elections in July. All offices are open for anyone who wishes to run. The offices for TAG are:

President
Secretary/Treasurer
8-bit Disk Librarian
ST Disk Librarian
Editor

In particular, we are looking for a new ST disk librarian, as Lance now has other commitments, and an Editor for the newsletter. The Editor would be responsible for writing the Hot Flashes and Relics to Relish and for organizing the newsletter (I would still supply the Presidential Address (if I'm still president after elections) and the ST Notes column). If you feel that you have something to contribute, please volunteer yourself. Remember, things get done better if you do them yourself!

Also, anyone interested in writing a regular 8-bit column (you need a modem to transfer it to the Editor) please feel free to volunteer.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of July will find TAG taking a look at the various methods of backing up software. While TAG does not condone the illegal copying or pirating of software, we do feel that legitimate users should be able to exercise the right to back up their software. There are many products on the market that simply don't do the job, and many users get ripped off from false claims and advertisements.

On the 8-bit side, Al Jennings will demo the Happy Backup system (a hardware mod to 810's and 1050's) and a program called Chipmunk (a software program that backs up software on ANY drive). The 1050 Happy has other benefits such as: true double density support, increased speed (3X!!), and support for most ram disks.

For the ST's, LeRoy Valley will demo Procopy (the all new version 1.40) and ST Copy 3.0.

Both of these packages are software only and seem to handle almost every copy protection scheme currently in use. So come on out to the July meeting and find out how to protect your valuable software!

RELICS TO RELISH

We had a very small turnout (about 15) at the May meeting, caused in part by the fact that the meeting was on the third Saturday instead of the second, but mostly because of the fantastic weather! Since I'm on vacation (and gone) June 13th, I told Marty that he would have to run the June meeting. He promptly thanked me (I think), then someone mentioned the idea of skipping the June meeting due to summer fever. A vote was held, and the meeting was canceled. Our regularly scheduled programming has been moved back to July, and yes, I'll be there.

Some good news for the club is that I got our first advertiser! Beginning this issue, Proco Products (seller of Procopy) will be advertising in the Michigan Atari Magazine. I'll keep trying to get more, as this can only help the MAM's cause!

I polled the members present on the idea of our club offering a C programming class, and the response was excellent (despite the small number present)! At the July meeting I will pass around a proposed outline of the class and a sign up sheet. The classes will be conducted by me, and will probably be at my house (unless I can make arrangements at the library). I am looking at a twice a month schedule, with classes lasting approximately 2 hours. The class will be primarily aimed at the ST using Megamax C, but most of the basic stuff will also work on the 8-bits.

Desktop publishing is a reality on home computers! That fact was evident as Publishing Partner, by Soft Logik, was demoed on the ST by Paul Bork. This program makes the process of creating flyers, newsletters, and.. and.. well just about ANY professional document, painless and easy! Text can be entered in any size from 6 to 144 point (1 point equals 1/72"), and in any of a variety of styles - italics, backslant, light, underlined, bold, mirrored, etc. You can load in different fonts included with Publishing Partner, or use one of the many fonts available on the BBS's, Compuserve, or Genie. Multiple blank columns can be linked together, and when text is entered into them, it will automatically overflow into a linked column! Anything you want to do with text can be done! Publishing Partner also allows you to bring in Degas .PI3 files, and you can then shrink, stretch, or cut a section of it out for use in your document. Paul also showed a new public domain utility (in our library) that allows you to convert PrintMaster icons into Degas .PI3 files for use in Publishing Partner! (You can use PicSwitch, also in our library, to convert a .PI1 or .PI2 picture file to a .PI3 file.)

Char Davis was on stage next with a demo of The News Station by Reeve Software for the 8-bits. This program is capable of creating signs, posters, newspapers, etc. In short, it's desktop publishing for the 8-bits! It has the ability to use Print Shop icons, Koala picture files, and different fonts. This program saves each page as a "plate", and the plate can not be printed until it is saved and the Press is loaded. The Press can then print the plate, and the resolution is excellent! (Comparable to Typesetter) This program was purchased by the club and will be raffled off at our July meeting (the turnout for the May meeting was to small to justify a raffle this month).

Also at the meeting was an ST disk of the month, to be included in our library. This disk was 828K and packed chock full of goodies collected from Genie and Compuserve. After everybody got a copy of this disk, the meeting was concluded.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk Lib.	790-1980
Lance Middleton	ST Disk Librarian	
Ron Hoffman	Assistant ST Disk Lib.	

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings	1050 Happy drive
Char Davis	Atari 800
Marty Schmidt	Monitor

ST Equipment Volunteers:

LeRoy Valley	Monitor
Dan Barrowman	520 ST
Paul Bork	Disk Drive

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're scheduled to bring equipment and you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL ME!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Presidential Mumblings for June
by Jim Steele

Well folks, here we are at another summer. Traditionally, the warm summer months are the slack season for computerdom. No one wants to be sitting inside slaving over a hot joystick, when they could be outside quaffing a cold one by the pool,eh? Perhaps that's why our attendance has been light lately. If this keeps up, we will have more out of town members recruited via Jerry's wanderings around the Atari show circuit than local people. Actually, I think the smaller meetings are more interesting....

The May meeting was very informal. Jerry talked about the Detroit Atari show. Those GAG members volunteering to work at the show should see him for Particulars. It was also decided to make the dues increase $15 effective in July. I don't think the extra 5 bucks will be a big burden on anyone, and it will keep the group from running on the edge all the time. No other new business was discussed. (As if we ever heard of Robert's Rules of Order anyway!)

See you in July.... Jim

Next Meetings

June 10 6:30 pm Neithercut
June 27 10:00 am National Computer Clinic
July 8 6:30 pm Neithercut
July 25 10:00 am National Computer Clinic

Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari users in the Flint, Michigan area. Membership is $15/yr. Benefits include this newsletter, and access to our disk and print libraries. Membership is NOT required to attend meetings. (But it is encouraged!)

8 Eight is Enough

8-bit News
by Jerry Cross

New Disks for June!

It's been pretty slow the last couple of months. Not too many new programs have been on my usual sources of bbs's. Thanks to some trading with clubs at the recent Buffulo Atari show, and from MACE, I put together another bunch of disks.

This month also marks a historic milestone for GAG...200 disks!!! Before I step down from by librarian possition, I hope to also have a complete collection of Analog (and maybe Antic) disks. This should make it easy for members to get hard to find programs published months ago in these magazines.

Starting off is Disk #198. This is a collection of PRINTSHOP icons. This is another set of high-quality pictures you can use with Printshop or compatable utilities.

Disk #199 is a collection of pictures. Since this disk comes from Germany, I couldn't make out some of the details about how these were done or what format, but they are very well done. (Hint: You must hit the space key to move on to the next picture....the instructions were also in German.)

Disk 200 and 201 contains more Koala pictures, but these are title screen pictures from some Atari 8-bit games. Many are very well done and look great when dumped to a printer. This disk comes from Germany also.

Disk #202 contains a utility that allows you to search through most commercial programs looking for these title pictures. You can then easily save them to your disk for future use. This disk also contains other title pictures. (This disk comes from a GAG member who forgot to give me his name. Another unforgivable goof by your librarian...sorry!)

Disk #203 is another long overdue educational disk. This disk contains an excellent program called NATIONAL FLAGS. Great for teaching the kids what other nations flags look like, and fun to play too!

Finally, the Wheel of Fortune disk (#170) has been updated. You can now make and use your own data files. If you already own the #170, bring it along to the next meeting for a free trade.

That's it for this month, be sure to attend the June meeting for a first hand report direct from the CES show in Chicago. See you at the meeting!

BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

Meeting Minutes

MEETING MINUTES and OTHER BITS
by Chuck Steele

At our May meeting we discussed how you can sign up on the GEnie service, without the $18 registration fee. I have yet to successfully log on. It doesn't seem to be as easy as CompuServe. If anyone gets on let us know.

Dan and myself went to another computer club in Battle Creek to learn more about the Computer Fair at Lakeview Square. The Fair is going to be in August and there will be a fee to enter. The money will be used to promote the fair. I see this as a good chance for the club to get a little exposure to the general public. Also we may be able to generate some revenue by having a raffle. We will be having a meeting this month to set the ground rules for the fair. More about this next month.

I had a demo of a new Astronomy program that I wrote, called Planetary Motions. The program allows you to see the planets as viewed from above the sun. You can view the solar system at different magnifications and different times. You can quickly go through time to the distant past or future. In my demo I held down the advance time key too long and we ended up in the year 456,783 AD!! The program is useful for determining which planets are visible on any given night. You can also determine when oppositions and conjunctions will occur. It allows you to find the best times to observe your favorite planets. This program will be added to our library.

Happy computing and see you at the computer fair.

BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
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GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meetings

Wyoming Library
3350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

Presidential Address

At our May Meeting a discussion of the price increase for the news letter was held. It was decided to try to sell ads to meet the price increase. We will reassess this decision in the fall.

The next item of discussion was the summer meetings. Because of the historical poor attendance during July and August it was decided to cancel meetings for this July and August.

We picked up three new members this month. The club keeps growing in spite of the fact that it is almost impossible to buy Atari equipment locally. Software seems to be getting harder to find in Grand Rapids also. Software City has stopped stocking software. However, they assure me that they will order whatever you want and they do have a large set of catalogs.

I think that someone is missing out on a lot of sales, as everyone I talk to is getting things from the mail order houses. Many of them would buy locally if the product was available at a reasonable price. Why don't we let the local retailers know this?

(The last two paragraphs are mine and do not necessarily reflect the position of G.R.A.S.S.)

Respectfully submitted.

Charles Baughman

President.....Ron Fargo
Treasurer.....George Nosky
Secretary.....Chuck Baughman

GRAND
RAPIDS
ATARI
SYSTEMS
SUPPORTERS

GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG ATARI

Presidential Address

PRE'S REPORT

Our May meeting was a good one! If you weren't there you missed some very interesting things. We had more computers then we had people! There were two ST's setup and running. We had several things going on, we had a little class on using Syncalc, there was a demo using the 3-D glasses on the ST (WOW!). We had lots of other little discussion groups. The disk of the month had a practice program for using our new BBS, You should have this program.

New Business:

*Our next Meeting will be held on June 20 at 11:00 at Dewing Hall at K-College. It will be a week later this month because of graduation. You will notice the time for the next meeting is at 11:00 instead on 2:00. Please make a note of this. We will be start all the meeting at this time from now on.

*We have our BBS phone line set up but we need to get a couple of disk drives to get it off the ground, if you know of some cheap please let me know. We will give out the phone number later.

*We also talked about not having meetings in July or August but to start up again in September. This will work well from the fact that we will have a picnic in August and our Chicago Trip in July.

*Chicago Trip, We would like to take a trip to the Atari Fair in Chicago. We would leave around 6:00 on July 25 and return around 7:00. If you would like to go we will have a sign up sheet at the next meeting. We will need people to drive, so if you can help us out. Also this being such a the long trip we will have to ask that any kids that want to go will have their parents attend. We can't be responsible.

*We will let you know about the picnic later. Maybe on our BBS?)

*As of this news letter writing we have not had an officers meeting, so I can't tell you what the theme for June will be. I will promise you it will be good!

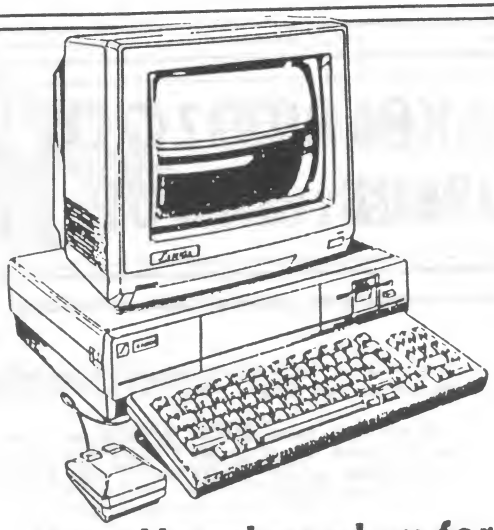
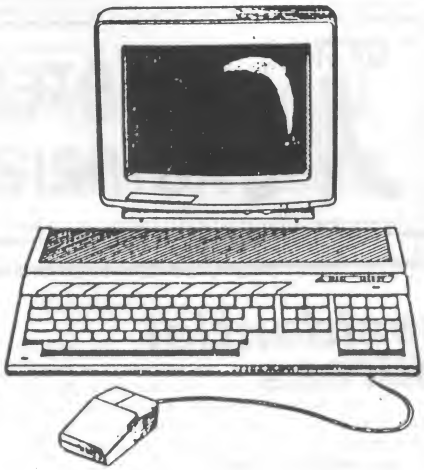
See Ya June 20 at 11:00 !!

Daniel Youngs
388-3164

GKAUG is based in Kalamazoo we meet at Kalamazoo College on the 2nd Saturday of each month. The time is 11:00. Our fee's are $20.00 per year.

Charles Engebretson & Mark Cantrell

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT— AFTER THREE YEARS, I'M FINALLY GOING TO KILL THE WIZARD!

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WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NEXT WAUG MEETING JUNE 9 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting Minutes

REPORT ON GENERAL MEETING 5/12/87
BY MICHAEL OLIN, RECORDING SECRETARY

The meeting was called to order by Mike Pieronek at 7:40 pm. Mike described the new 8-bit disk library listing and noted that there are now 119 disk selections available. Mike has added over 90 new disks during the last 3 months. Craig Harvey also discussed some of the new entries in the ST library.

Mike Olin presented the Proposed WAUG Charter to the members and led a question/answer session. Mike asked that everyone study it during the coming month so that a vote to accept it can be taken during the June meeting. The nomination form describing the officer positions was circulated and elections will be held immediately after the Charter referendum.

Bill Rayl demoed Publishing Partner by Soft Logic, a software package that is very similar to Page Maker for the MacIntosh but has more features. Bill showed how the latest issue of the WAUG Newsletter was developed and produced. Porting pictures from Degas and other formats is one of the strong features of this package which includes many of the functions found in a good word processor. Bill explained that the program was designed by the developer of Data Perfect for the 8-bits and is the only software package produced by this company. They have a reputation for being readily available and willing to support registered owners.

Richard Schrader demoed Rambrandt from Antic. This system allows more color and finer detail than the Koala system and creates nicer printed output. Richard circulated some of his art that was produced on an Okimate color printer to show the versatility of this software package.

Doug Feldman then tabulated and announced the names of those persons who had been nominated for the various officer positions. These persons were asked not to decline a nomination until next month so as to have sufficient time to actually consider running.

The meeting was adjourned for sales of Library disks and general conversation.

JUNE 9 - WAUG OFFICER ELECTION

All nominated officers who wish to keep their name on the election ballot will be given the opportunity to compete for elected office. We will start with president and decide each elected position one at a time. As each position is voted on, the candidates for that position will be asked to wait outside the meeting room while a show-of-hands tally is made. The winning candidate must obtain a majority of votes from the members who attend the meeting. If there is no majority winner, the top two vote getters will compete in a runoff election. Candidates who do not win a majority vote can still keep their name on the ballot for any subsequent nominated positions.

The new officers will have July and August to make plans for the next general WAUG meeting, to be held on September 8.

JUNE 9 - WAUG FLEA MARKET

All paid members can bring their hardware and software to sell at the meeting. There will be a complete 8-bit system to use for quick demonstrations. We can also use this time for demos of new any acquisitions.

WAUG AUTHORIZED ATARI SERVICE: C.P. REPAIRS

The officers of WAUG wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Bob and Derek Fritz, the proprietors of C.P. REPAIRS in Whitmore Lake, MI. Over the last 4 months, Bob has repaired or swapped hardware for use on all three BBS's that support WAUG communications. Bob and Derek provide a convenient pick-up and delivery service within a 30 mile radius of Whitmore Lake. The amazingly nominal cost is $30 plus parts. The C.P.REPAIRS is now gaining national acclaim. They have fixed hardware shipped from as far away as South Dakota and Connecticut. They are fully equipped to repair all Atari ST and 8-bit systems. You can contact C.P.REPAIRS by modem (313-449-8544 at 2400/1200/300 baud) or by voice phone

(313-449-2565). In either case, leave your message and a voice phone number and Bob will get back to you within 24 hours.

WAUG EXPRESS BBS RETIRED FROM SERVICE

Doug Feldman announces his decision to retire from active sysop status of the WAUG Express BBS. This was a very exciting and challenging experience for me and I surely discovered alot of Atari owners this year.

There are several reasons for my decision. My responsibilities to my family and work have increased significantly. In addition, I had hoped that a larger number of WAUG members would use the BBS for frequent updates and discussion of WAUG activities. Instead, the system has become increasingly used by younger modem owners merely wishing to download everything without contributing to the ongoing discussions. Finally, it is obvious that most Atari modem owners now own or soon will own a 1200 baud modem. Thus, my budget XM-301 cannot continue to serve the telecommunication needs of advanced users.

I plan to continue my involvement in Atari telecommunications by participating in the many other excellent BBS in the Ann Arbor calling area.

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER SELECTIONS
NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST
SEP 8 --- TO BE ANNOUNCED

HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($3.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

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Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.

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Atari News

FLASH: ST-TRANSFORMER APPROVED
FOR DISTRIBUTION
By John Nagy

DAREK MIHOCKA's ATARI 800-in-an-ST-Program WILL BE RELEASED with ATARI's approval!

NEIL HARRIS, spokesman for ATARI, has agreed (in a public message on the GEnie ATARI SIG) to allow both USE and DISTRIBUTION of the ATARI code within Darek's emulator. The permission is contingent on Darek's PUBLISHING the SOURCE CODE for his emulator, so that other programmers may be able to add their efforts. Neil says the object of this move is to increase the likelihood of a truly versatile, full-speed emulator.

As it stands now, the ST TRANSFORMER uses largely custom routines modeled after the ATARI ROM, with some code grafted into the program at startup by a port of the TRANSLATOR DISK (or, in another version, they are already within the emulator program). That's what ATARI had said that Darek could not legally do.

At the BUFFALO ATARIFEST in late April, two user groups showed Darek's "ST TRANSFORMER" in operation. The author sent both the GENESEE ATARI GROUP (G.A.G., Flint, Michigan) and the WESTMORELAND ATARI COMPUTER ORGANIZATION (W.A.C.O., North Huntingdon, Pennslyvania) copies of the public domain emulator for demonstration only. Interest at both tables was brisk despite the uncomplete state of the program and the current slowness of execution (20%-40% "normal" speed depending, on the program). ATARI tried to ignore the demos.

WACO members quizzed ATARI reps over the actual status of the TRANSLATOR, which was sent to all registered user groups for free distribution. Sandy first said that it WAS NOT SENT and remained ATARI'S property, then admitted that she didn't know for sure. At issue was what restrictions (if any) can now be put on the uses of the disks after years of free distribution.

An intriguing facet of the conflict appeared when a program called XLFIX, available for sale in ANTIC MAGAZINE's public domain library, was found to work as well or better than the original ATARI disk. There are several other translators and operating systems available (both in the public domain and commercially - BOSSXL, NEWELL OSN, etc.). It appears that ATARI would first have to legally assert ownership and control of ALL the "translators" in order to get any legal claim against Darek for using one or more of them in his 800 emulator.

The dark prospects of long and possibly unsuccessful legal action, together with petition drives, newsletter editorials, and comments running in most major telecommunication services and magazines - all in support of the ST TRANSFORMER - now seem to have gotten through to ATARI.

In May, Neil Harris went on record saying that if Darek would only put his program source code in the public domain for further development by other programmers, then ATARI would give their permission for use and distribution of their operating system.

Darek Mihocka was unwilling to release his source code as public domain, for he would then have given up any rights to his efforts. Fortunately, ATARI softened their position, changing their demand to simply the PUBLISHING of the code, with the rights to his work remaining with the author.

Darek had previously contacted several other major ATARI-interest magazines about the possibility of their publishing the TRANSFORMER and source code in copyrightable form, but was turned down by each. The main reason was ATARI's vocal objection to the project and its legal questions. However, Neil stated in his May 15th messages that ANY magazine would be satisfactory, and that a formal proposal letter of permission would be sent within days. Richard Frick of ATARI called to confirm this on May 20.

Darek will have the consent needed for any interested magazine to publish and distribute the ATARI ROM with the emulator, as well as any parts of DOS and BASIC that may help. Availability time, publishing timetable, and even which magazine will offer the program can only be guessed at. It is clear that wherever it is printed, ATARI wants no restrictions on distribution (i.e., ANTIC and its "no BBS" rule). Frick indicated that ATARI could influence ANTIC on this issue for this particular program if necessary.

All the flap hasn't slowed Darek's progress on the continuously developing project. He added SOUND, GTIA graphics, DOS MENUS, JOYSTICK CONTROL, and yes, PLAYER-MISSLE graphics to the already fairly capable emulator. The PLAYER-MISSLE routines were completed and donated by another sympathetic programmer. Speed improvements continue to be made.

Throughout the months of discussion on the subject, Neil Harris and company at ATARI kept asking "Why would anyone want to use 8-bit software on an ST?"... Perhaps a much better question is "WHY NOT?". WACO and other user groups WANT an emulator to provide SOME kind of link, however flawed, between the two products of ATARI CORP.

Distribution of a successful emulator disk by ST dealers might be all some 8-bit owners need to convince them that it is time for a system upgrade- or at least assure them that an upgrade in hardware won't mean an instant loss of 100% of the software they have grown with for years.

Atari News

Buffalo Atarifest
By: Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

Atari announced that many of their new products will be in manufacturing by June, and will be on the shelves soon after. These include the new Atari game machine (which will include a cartridge version of Flight Simulator II plus scenery disks), the 1-meg ST and Laser printer, the PC-Clones, Modem, and some software titles.

For news on other products, just check out the past newsletters. Nothing new was announced.

I questioned Neil about their reason for packaging the handler separately from the modem and he mentioned it was because non-atari users would have no use for it. The Communications kit will include an SIO cable plus disk and docs. I'm still upset about it. When I mentioned all of this to the other user groups, they wanted to start a petition drive!

The ST emulator was shown by both WACO and GAG. It generated a lot of interest but Atari decided to ignore us. A representative from WACO was trying to generate some response but I don't know what developed from it. He did get Neil Derrik's phone number and we are under the impression he will give him a call Monday.

There were 29 vendors at the show (several of which were user groups). I felt this was a poor showing.

Attendance was poor, and was made worse by very sloppy advertising by Atari. The first ads had the date of the show wrong, and the next ad had the club name wrong. Worse yet, they advertised that kids under 12 were to be admitted free. They lost about $500 from admission ticket sales because of this.

On the funnier side, at the same convention center on Sunday, Oral Roberts was giving one of his preaching sessions to about 1000 people. When I walked into the hall at 9:00, I heard this huge crowd singing and I thought "WOW, these Atari guys sure know how to put on a show!" I tried to take my Atari computer with the broken "7" key to Oral and see if he could heal it, but I couldn't get close to him.

Meanwhile, back at the hotel, there must have been 200-300 kids there for a hockey tournament. What a madhouse!

Hybrid arts did not show up for the show, but did send the Midi-Maze program. They only had 6 computers running, and did not have a tournament. The program is not yet complete, because the author wanted to add some new features.

Like I said, not much news to report. It was generally a boring show, and no new products or announcements. Oh, they did bring a prototype of the Atari laser printer, and it seemed to work nice.

Detroit Atarifest
Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

The Atari-Magic Show Is Coming To Detroit!

Over the past few months you may have heard about it. "Yeah, some sort of trade show", you said, "WOW! An all-Atari swap meet!?!", or "Are they going to have dancing girls?"

Well, it's time to bring out some details. Here's what's the MAGIC club has been planning for the past few months.

The Atari-Magic show will be an all-Atari trade show. There will be over 30 companies that support Atari products, who will be coming to Detroit to answer questions, give demonstrations and seminars, and sell merchandise. These shows have been held across the country, from Seattle to New York, and from Chicago to Dallas. Thousands of product hungry Atarians have jammed into convention centers and hotels to see new products and ask questions of such big-time Atari supporters as Bill Wilkenson, Neil Harris, and Mark Jenson, just to name a few.

Among the things you will see at the Detroit show will be MIDI-MAZE, a multi-player, multi-computer maze game. This game is played on 16 Atari-ST computers at once! Sponsored by Hybred Arts, there will be some fantastic prizes awarded to the best players.

Hybred Arts also plans to sponsor an impressive MIDI concert. Professional musicians will be on

hand to demonstrate the musical power of the Atari-ST, and show how to turn your computer into a home recording studio. Times of the concerts have not yet been arranged.

Among the companies planning to attend are Michtron, Atari Corp., Analog, ICD, Astra, Alpha Systems, Disk Publications, and Best Products. Many other companies have expressed interest in coming, and I will pass them along when we know for sure if they are coming.

There will also be a full schedule of seminars and workshops. Planned are discussions on Desktop Publishing, Telecommunication, Programming Languages, and other interesting topics. Guest speakers such as Neil Harris, Sig Hartman, and Gorden Monnier (Michtron) will be on hand to field questions about new products.

This show also will feature the full line of new Atari products, such as the PC Clone, Mega-ST and Laser Printers, the new XE Game Machines, new software, and more. Michtron plans to introduce several new products at this show also.

There will also be loads of door prizes, including a new Atari-ST system. Refreshments will also be available.

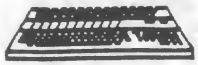
The show is scheduled for Friday, August 28 through Sunday, August 30 at the Southfield Hilton Hotel, located on Nine Mile Rd., just west of Greenfield, in Southfield, Michigan. The show is open Friday from 6:00 to 9:00, Saturday from 10:00 to 5:00, and Sunday from 11:00 to 5:00.

Advanced tickets for the show are available from your user groups, or may be purchased by mail. The price is $4 per day, or $8 for a 3-day pass. Tickets must be ordered by August 1. Price at the door is $5 and $10. Admission to all seminars and concerts is included in the price.

If you would like further information, or wish to order tickets, please contact Jerry Cross at 313-736-4544 or on the FACTS BBS at 313-736-3920. You may order by mail by sending a check to: Magic-Atari Show, 28111 Imperial Dr., Warren, MI., 48093.

A special hotline has been set up to keep you up-to-date on the show. For a recorded bulletin, call 313-751-8291.

For out of town visitors, we are putting together a tour package containing maps, events calendar, hotel information, and some other information that will help you enjoy your visit. Send your requests to the above address.



ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

No reviews. No reviews. I'm tired of reviews. The combination of reviews and summer heat have finally taken their toll and scrambled my brain, therefore this months column will just be a scrambled collection of tidbits of information.

Did you know that Haba Writer II locks up on occasion? I had this happen to me while writing last month's column and lost about three hours worth of work. I finally pinned it down. If you use the CUT function to delete massive amounts of text, you will end up CUTTING your throat. Use the CLEAR function instead and the problem disappears.

Procopy version 1.40 is due out as of 5/20/87 (that's right, you can buy it now). Not only can it copy the latest and greatest (Arctic Fox, Goldrunner, Trimbase) but Proco Products has added a couple of nice features. On unprotected disks, the write with format is now faster by 100%! It also has a fast format option (how would you like to format disks in 15 seconds?), and for the extremely careful, a verify option has been added.

Having trouble getting Genie to accept your user ID and password from a DO file in Flash? Set up the DO file to simply feed a return at the first U#= prompt, then feed the user ID and password at the second U#= prompt. It'll work every time!

Still booting your hard drive from a floppy? Get on Genie or Compuserve right now and download the Supra utilities v2.61! This autobooter works great on all Supra drives. For all you Atari SH-204 owners, you're not left out in the cold. You can send $19.95 to Supra and get a set of Supra utilities designed to work with your drive. Believe me, the Supra utilities are far superior to Atari's.

Having trouble with Write 90 from XLent Software on the new GEM based VIP? The old version (which worked with the old VIP) prints garbage when used with the GEM version. Simply send your disk back in, and they'll replace it at no charge.

Flight Simulator now has joystick support. Yes, that's right, and at no extra charge. It seems that were some bugs in the original release, and when Sublogic fixed those bugs, they implemented joystick support. Send your disk back to Sublogic and it'll get updated FREE.

To those of you who purchased RAID from Michtron... Load it up and see if you are greeted with a large v1.1 on the screen. If you're not, then you haven't got the latest release - and there were some serious bugs in the assembler...

Megamax 2.0 is just around the corner. Megamax is removing the 32K limitation, improving the compile and link times (now that's impressive!), and making their object files compatible with the Atari Developers Kit Alcyon C. Updates will cost registered owners $20.00.

Z-Time owners can get some software off from Compuserve or Genie that works better than their original software. It's called TD (for Time & Date) and makes setting up and reading the Z-Time clock a cinch. Want a Z-Time without the expense... The Z-Time is nothing more than a Dallas Semiconductor DS1216E chip in fancy wrapping with installation instructions. You can buy the chip for about $20 at electronic wholesalers or for $25 from: Transformation Technologies 10509 S.D. Mission Rd. Suite T P.O. Box 880668 San Diego, CA 92108 The TD software also explains how to install this chip.

Panasonic 1080/1090 ribbons for $4.50 each! Yes, that's right $4.50 each. The only catch is that you have to buy a dozen of them. They are generic, but they work OK. Contact Superior Business Forms in Saginaw at (517) 793- 6770.

Looking for an excellent VT-100 emulator? Uniterm v1.7b works EXTREMELY well, supporting full graphics modes AND 128 columns (even on color screens). Best of all, it's public domain. See Genie, Compuserve, or our library.

Well, thats all the time I have. Hope some of these tidbits proved interesting. See ya next month!

Review Eight

RAMBRANDT
Review by Richard Schrader (WAUG)

Rambrandt is the best "artist" type software for Atari 8-bit. It's available from the ANTIC CATALOG for $19.95 and was produced for them in FORTH by the Pittsburgh Atari Computer Users Group, PACE.

This program has so many features that it will be difficult to enumerate them in one article. It's not the type of "paint" program you give to junior on his first disk. Some of the features are a mite technical and take a little time and patience to learn,but it'S well worth it. Of course, it's perfect for us really cool people that are really 'into' Atari. It's also very flexible. Of course you have a touch pad. NO!? Well, use your joystick, WHAT?! Well, the keyboard can also be used. I recommend touchpad (with keyboard for those tight spots).

Standard line/box/circle/fill routines are here as well as text and undo (which should be required on ALL software!). Five graphic modes are supported with up to 16 colors at once. '0' works with Movie Maker backgrounds, '4' with the other paint programs. There are also utility files for other more obscure formats.

There are many fills and brush patterns available including quilts, stripes, tiles, 'rubber stamp', "random" with adjustable probability, and different fonts, and all are user definable. If you have an XE you can use the extra memory to work on 8 pictures at once, moving parts from one to another.

"Window" mode is powerful. You can take a section, "rubber stamp" it, flip it over, rotate, or even load different versions of it into to the buffer and animate it! (Too bad you can't save it.) "Hunt" will only paint over a selected color, an interesting effect. Did I say up to 16 colors? That was a lie. Using DL interrupt the number of colors can be indefinite!

But wait folks, you have not truly begun to paint without also getting the "3-D Module". Another $15 bite, but again worth it. It's not quite CAD maybe, but the closest 8-bit equivalent. You get spheres, "spools", and columns in any size, number, location or position (as long as it's horizontal or vertical!) But by combining shapes you can get fascinating believable effects that can print out very nicely.

You don't need to pay more for the printer support modules, fortunately. You can get a fast-small print for the Epson, a slower tone scaled print for Epson and C.Itoh, or another for Epson and Prowriter that will do 16 shades and negative prints. But if you want to see your creations in glorious technicolor, the crowning gem is the Okimate 10 support. This maligned, cheap'n cheezy, near orphan printer does great color prints, especially with this software. There is a menu of 24 color stripes you use to tell the printer exactly what color pins to use! Need more colors? Another chart will appear.

So kick off your shoes, have a cup of coffee! The printing takes 20 minutes! Hey man, this is ART! And you can't rush Rem, uh Rambrandt!

FUNSTUFF

COMPUTER QUIZ
By Guy A. Hurt (C.H.A.O.S.)

So. You've owned your Atari for sometime now. You've played a few games, downloaded some files, developed letters on a word processor and maybe even have written a few programs of your own. Yes, by now, there is no doubt that you are a master of your machine, and have a good understanding of how it works and how computers function in general. But just for the fun of it, why not test yourself with the quiz below. Most questions deal with the 8-bit Atari while some deal with computers in general. The answers and rankings are provided at the end. Good luck, you expert you.

1. The primary function of computer memory is to:
   (a) store information
   (b) manipulate data
   (c) perform instructions
   (d) transfer media items
2. The maximum number of TEXT LINES possible on the Atari is:
   (a) 20 (b) 22 (c) 24 (d) 26
3. The screen editor is symbolized by:
   (a) R: (b) C: (c) E: (d) NONE OF THESE
4. How do you let the Atari know where to find a customized set of character definitions?
   (a) by poking the alternate set into ROM
   (b) by poking the alternate set into RAM
   (c) by poking an address value into memory location 756
   (d) by modifying the display list
5. How many jiffies in a minute?
   (a) 600 (b) 3,600 (c) 6,000 (d) 9,600
6. You'd like to write a program that will read in a series of numbers and square those that are both integer and even. A function that will help you accomplish this is:
   (a) SQR (b) INT (c) ABS (d) TWO OF THESE
7. Which is an advantage of memory storage over peripheral storage?
   (a) more data can be stored
   (b) more data can be accessed
   (c) data can be accessed more quickly
   (d) the storage is more permanent
8. Atari BASIC differs from most other micro-BASIC dialects in its handling of:
   (a) strings
   (b) the ABS function
   (c) the LET statement
   (d) subroutines
9. There are three sizes possible for player-missiles. They are known as "normal" and:
   (a) twice the normal, three times the normal
   (b) half the normal, twice the normal
   (c) twice the normal, four times the normal
   (d) three times the normal, six times the normal
10. The Atari outputs a video signal of:
    (a) 262 scan lines
    (b) 164 scan lines
    (c) 288 scan lines
    (d) 302 scan lines
11. Which of the statements below will generate random integers between 10 and 100 inclusively?
    (a) 10 X=INT(RND(0)*100+1)-10
    (b) 10 X=INT(RND(0)*100+1)-INT(RND(0)*10+1)
    (c) 10 X=INT(RND(0)*90+1)+10
    (d) 10 X=INT(RND(0)*91+1)+9
12. In the Atari, ANTIC:
    (a) is involved with sound generation
    (b) is involved with video generation
    (c) uses its own control program
    (d) TWO OF THESE
13. Whatever program your Atari is running, it will be interrupted every:
    (a) 1/600 seconds
    (b) 1/10 seconds
    (c) 1/60 seconds
    (d) 1/6 seconds
14. What's the most important reason for memory addressing?
    (a) to help distinguish the locations of the accumulator and registers from ordinary data
    (b) to increase access time
    (c) to give every item in memory an unique place to reside and be identified from
    (d) to help distinguish items in memory from items in external storage
15. Serial is to modem as ? is to printer. The ? should be replaced with:
    (a) cereal
    (b) parallel
    (c) analog
    (d) trinary
16. Which is the fastest computer operation?
    (a) reading two data values from tape
    (b) reading two data values from disk
    (c) printing two data values
    (d) adding two data values together

Now then. That wasn't so bad was it? Of course not. And, although there probably really isn't any need for you to verify your answers, the answer key is as follows:
1-a,2-c,3-c,4-c,5-b,6-b,7-c,8-a,9-c,10-a,11-d, 12-d,13-c,14-c,15-b,16-d

SCORE RANKINGS
16 Why don't you write the next quiz?
15-13 Not bad, bytehead
12-10 Pretty fair, Joe
9- 7 Kinda shaky, Jack
6- 0 Gotcha!

Please send any and all comments to:
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Programming

THE FORTH STAGE-
A LEARNING GUIDE
Ed Crisler (A.L.E.)

Hello again, so did anyone look at the command list? For those of you who haven't figured it out yet the VLIST command lists all the command words currently in your FORTH library. I'm hoping you all played around with the language a little and are starting to understand of few of the basic commands. This time around we will look at stack manipulation and how to define a word.

Lets start with a word definition, since we did that last time and I promised an explanation.

```
: DIR 0 LIST ;
: DIRP PON DIR POFF ;
: DIRL 0 50 INDEX ;
: DIRLP PON DIRL POFF ;
```

These are the words I defined for you last time. Let's take this nice and slow.

1) The : tells FORTH that you wish to define a word. The first word after the : surrounded by spaces is the command word you are defining. Spaces are very important in FORTH as they define the end of a word or constant. This allows you to define a word as any combination of numbers or letters you wish.(remember no spaces in the word)

2) All items following the space after the defined word are considered the commands that will be implemented, the end of the definition is marked by a ; . Remember that the word that follows the : is the word to be defined and that all other words that follow up to a ; are the instructions.(called definition from now on) Always remember to use your spaces.

Before you can define words, you must know how to do some programming. Lets try to write a program that will take a number and returns its square.

To do this we must understand the stack. Type in the following:

```
1 2 3
```

At the top of the screen you should see these numbers in reversed order. This version of FORTH provides a constant view of the top of the stack. The FORTH stack works on a last in first out basis, LIFO. It's important you remember this so you don't lose your place on the stack.

There are a number of commands that manipulate the numbers on the stack we will try to cover a few of them right now.

Type . and you will see the number on the top of the stack (the last number entered) displayed. The . is a FORTH word that tells the stack to print the number on top and delete it, then move the rest of the stack up. The DROP command has a similar function except it doesn't print the number.

The DUP command is very useful, it duplicates the number on top of the stack and places it on top. Thus 3 DUP, the stack would read 3 3. The SWAP command is used to take the top number and trade places with the second number. Last we have an extension of the DUP called ?DUP. This command will only duplicate the top of the stack if it does not equal zero.

The math operators are easy to use. Just remember that you must use RPN (Reverse Polish Notation). I will cover RPN more in depth later, for now just watch how I do it. RPN really is easy if you just thing in human rather than machine logic. In fact that is also the key to FORTH programming. Lets try a few, type 2 2 +. Well, nothing is displayed but if you look at the stack indicator you will see the number 4. What happened was that the number 2 was placed on the stack and then a 2 was pushed on with it. The + told the stack to give it the first two numbers(remove them from the stack) and to add them, then to place the answer on the stack. To print out the result we would change the statement to read '2 2 + .' . This would take the answer from the stack and print it (remember the . command from earlier). There is an easier way to do this using the DUP statement. We will cover that in just a moment.

I know that these explanations seem a little easy but then again the language is easy. Lets try that square function.

1) Define the word you wish to use.

2) Now you provide the words definition. Remember we are trying to have the square of the number we entered returned.(hint try the DUP command)

3) Be sure to close your definition with a ;.

Here's the sample I put together that includes a command or two we haven't covered yet, I promise a full explanations next time. Until then play around with the stack and I'm sure

you will find it easier than you ever believed. Until next time, may the FORTH be with you!

```
: SQR DUP ." THE SQR OF " . ." IS " DUP * .
;   ( RUN THE WORD LIKE THIS eg.  3 SQR (and
then return)
```

Computer Music

MIDITALK
Mitch Wells (C.H.A.O.S.)

REVIEW: Steinberg PRO-24 sequencer
for the Atari ST

I promised an article on using sequencers in my last article, but then someone pointed out that I had done that before, so rather than rehash, here's a review of software I demonstrated at the general meeting on 5/16.

Certainly there's been a lot of buzz about MIDI software for the ATARI ST computer: it's faster than the Macintosh with better graphics, 512K memory standard on the smallest machine with built-in MIDI ports (in and out only) and sells for a 1/3 of the price (Monochrome 520 systems are going for as little as $500, I understand). But in America (where ATARI has to get their computers by FCC standards) professional-power MIDI software has been slow in coming (unlike the MAC). Right now there are only 3 packages available that would meet the standards of what I call "Professional": Dr. T's KCS, Hybrid Arts' SMPTETRACK ST and Steinberg's PRO-24 (a fourth package, Sonus's Masterpiece ST is on the way). Of these three, I've used KCS and PRO-24 but prefer PRO-24 and so I'll tell you something about it.

Most MIDI packages excell at one thing or another: they're either a great MIDI recorder (real-time input like an analog tape recorder with features like limited sequencing and SMPTE timing--Hybrid Arts' SMPTETRACK ST or Intelligent Music's Jam Factory would be examples of this) or a great sequencer (setting up real- or step-time input in patterns and linking the patterns to make a song like a drum machine--Dr. T's KCS or Sonus' SuperSequencer 128 are the examples here). But PRO-24 is a combination of both that excells at both functions and is VERY user-friendly. PRO-24 is fully GEM- implememting, graphic-oriented and easy to understand.

The way you record with PRO-24 is pretty simple. If you look at the screen, you see "buttons" marked "record", "play", "fast-forward", and so on. Yup, you guessed it: just pick record and play, hook up your MIDI master keyboard to the ATARI and off you go. Of course, this isn't the only way to record MIDI information, but it is the simplest. Usually when I sit down for a session, I'll record a countdown, then use my master keyboard to lay down the drum parts. With an auto-record feature (which also can be used for punch-in -out) I set my sections to exact lengths. Once a section is recorded, I name it as a sequence, and this is where the editing features of PRO-24 take over. Although there are only 24 tracks for real-time input, any track can have any number of sequences. Any sequence can be copied to any section of the "tape" (song) or repeated any number of times. Any sequence can be assigned to any MIDI channel or "split" to send to two MIDI channels; any note can be the split point. Sequences can be transposed, given new velocity data (including automatic creshendo and de-creshendo), or quantized in either a destructive or non-destructive manner. Sequences can be both note-event and controller-event edited using a graphic editing system which utilizes GEM and the mouse; this feature is extremely easy to create with. And much of this sort of editing can be done WHILE the piece is playing! (16-bit magic, you know). Also real-time recording of solos and such is easily recorded using an empty track and the record button, just like punching in on a tape deck, except that these sections can be stretched out to exact lengths for exact quantization.

Included with the program is a MIDI dump utility written pretty much for Yamaha synths only (I tried it with the DX7, TX7, and RX21and it worked fine with all). Included with my version (1.1 final) was a number of "modules" to allow the dump utility to work with a Juno synth or a Casio but these modules aren't very flexible and no provision was made for users to write modules for their own synths. Further, there is no way to automatically send out patches when booting up a song. The dump utility could have been thought out more, but at least there is one.

Speaking of MIDI, the program's implementation of commands like note-off and mode setting is complete and easy to implement. Also included with vers. 1.1 is a real-time counter which turns into a SMPTE clock when used with their SMPTE interface (which sells for less than the program I understand). I hear 5 SMPTE standards are supported (although that's not been verified by Steinberg) and the interface will be available in late spring.

In conclusion, although I have found a bug or two, the program is my main MIDI software, and though it won't do EVERYTHING, what it does do, it does well and with great ease. I heartily recommend the program to anyone who has an ST in their studio... Further I would say for the price ($295 list), it's worth considering buying an ST for (whole package for under $800)!

Review ST

ZMAG PRODUCT REVIEW BOARD
DataRetrieve for the ST
by Philip Pennie

I just recently made what turned out to be a very wise purchase. Having wanted a filing system for research notes for some time, I finally invested in DataRetrieve by Abacus Software.

My only experience with databases previous to this was on the Apple, and I must say, working with the ST and DataRetrieve is a far cry from that. For one thing, DataRetrieve's files can be quite large - up to 64k characters. For me that means I am able to set up files that will store long quotations. DataRetrieve saves these files on the disk dynamically, which I guess means that it does not save the empty spaces you do not use. The long and short of it is I can save the equivalent of over 250 3x5 note cards filled with information, publisher, author, quotes, page number, etc. on a single 350k disk. And the best thing is that DataRetrieve is compatible with a ram disk (which it comes with) so that searching and file manipulation takes seconds.

Besides all this, DataRetrieve has lots of bells and whistles: You can create your own masks on the screen so you actually enter the data in a nicely designed form, with 6 different fonts. More importantly, you can set up printer forms that allow you to print out reports in almost any form, including form letters, multicolumned reports, 3x5 note cards, roledex cards, and so on.

All of this involves some very sophisticated logic. Thus, another plus is that DataRetrieve is entirely Gem and mouse-driven-- to set up forms you just draw boxes (the commands are echoed on the keyboard). To flip through the files you simply click the mouse on the appropriate token. And it is all clearly and intuitively organized so that a novice (like me) can set up a filing system with little or no difficulty.

But the best thing about DataRetrieve, the reason why I got it, is the price. It lists for $49, and you can get it mailorder for about $33.

So if you are in the market for an inexpensive yet powerful database/filing system, check out Datatrieve!

Star Trek Preview
By Steve Dunphy RI ACE Reporter

I have just witnessed the most incredible, realistic space game for the ST! It is called Star Trek and it is put out by Simon and Shuster. It must have been a beta test version because when I called Simon and Shuster to ask them about it, because I wanted to order it, they didn't know anything about it! Strange! Here is the ultimate space game for all Trekkies in the Universe with ST's and they don't even know about it. Maybe it is being done by an out-of-house software designer and will be distributed by Simon and Shuster. Well, after they see the fever that this review will cause, they definitely will take credit for it.!!!

Star Trek opens with a digitized "Space the final frontier...." right off the sound track of the TV series. It sounds real good to my pointed ears! Next thing you know the theme is being played in non digitized sound. It finishes loading and you see a screen with the a picture of the Enterprise's bridge with Capt. Kirk, Sulu, Spock, Dr. McCoy, Scotty, Checkov and Uhura all at their respective stations. Now if that is not enough to drive a trekkie nuts then what I saw next will. It is entirely mouse driven and you click on each individual to get to his functions. Spock for star chart info. and damage report, Sulu to set the course and put the ship in orbit, Checkov for battle stations, Uhura for communications reports, Scotty for Warp and impulse drive stats and Dr. Mcoy for the health status of your bridge command. Capt. Kirk has the final commands of affirming warp out and transporting down to a planet.

The game plays alot like Sundog and Star Raiders rolled up into one. First thing you do is find a system on Sulu's star chart. It has a listing of the stars and when you click each one on it tells you where it is located and how long it will take to get there. You click on set course and the line between the middle dot which is representing the Enterprise and the star turns green. Next you go to Sulu's icon and click on the warp drive indicator to a selected warp speed. You then click on Capt. Kirk and you warp out to your destination. Dont go faster than Warp speed 9 because Scotty will come on and warn you that "we'll blow up any minute now if ya keep dis up Captin" in a clear digitized voice that had me stunned. The clink sound you hear next will be an indicator that you have arrived at the system.

Next you have to choose the icon in Sulu's console that looks like a solar system. Click on Spock and he will show info on the screen that will tell you if the system is independent, Klingon, Romulon or Federation. Also click on the icon representing the planets on the solar

system screen and you will see what type it is. Some serve no known purpose to this author (hopefully they actually do, since many have some pretty neat titles, like leeching planet and robot fortress). Others have functions like a repair drone, energy station and inhabited planets. You can beam down to the inhabited planets.

So set your orbit for a selected planet and click on the impluse engines. You will see your ship icon going around the solar chart with a dotted line to the preselected planet. Once you reached the planet Mr. Sulu comes on in a digitized voice saying "Now in orbit Sir". Sometimes you hear the communications whistle when you enter orbit. Click on Uhura and she will receive the message. This message is useful to the playing of the game. If the planet is inhabitable you can beam down. Click on Capt. Kirk and transporter box will be shown. Click on the box and you will see all seven crew members faces along with the round transporter base. Click on each face you want to beam down and then click on the transporter. You will be greeted by digitized sound in the form of the actual transporter sound from the TV series. Neato!!

Next you will be on the planet and will have something to get or discover there. When you meet an obstacle click on your crew and see if you want to take their advice. Sometimes it will end in hurting your party and you will have to beam back up. When this happens click on McCoy's icon and you will see each person represented by their faces and a health bar underneath them indicating how fast they are healing. I never saw a member of the crew die, but I wouldn't rule it out. If you find something beam it up and put it in storage aboard the Enterprise. It will come in handy as you comb the galaxy.

Next, warp out and find another star system to visit. but watch out for Klingons, Romulans and rebel ships they will attack you. If they do you will hear "Battle stations" and the werp-werp claxon digitized sound with Kirk's voice. Click on Checkov and activate the phasers or photon torpedoes. Go to the round tactical grid and click on the yellow ship indicators. You will then see a vector drawn Klingon, Romulan, or rebel starship. Hold the mouse button over it and you will hear Checkov say "locked on target sir" bring the mouse back and click on one of the squares in each corner and you will see either a phaser or photon torpedo fired at your adversaries. You even hear it firing in digitized sound like you heard it on TV! This is most impressive and if you destroy the Klingon Ship, Scotty comes on and says "Gut 'im Captin'"!!! This blew my socks off! If you win you can continue to search the galaxy. If you lose you will see Mr. Spock's face on the screen with his digitized voice razzing you with "I never did understand humans...".

All in all the game is by far the ultimate space game for any computer!! It has action, excellent graphics, completely mouse controlled, digitized sound that will make you feel like you are there on the Enterprise's bridge and game play to make it the best selling game for any computer. If Simon and Shuster holds this back they are crazy!!!! Its worth $100. And I ain't one to pay more than $30 dollars for a program. It has a load and save option so you can save your current game and play it later (you can only save one game though). The one thing lacking (and it will come with the manual and the released program I am sure) is the object of the game. I assumed from messages and game play that your mission is to put down the rebellion and defeat the Klingon invasion. You would be wise to document all the star systems and make it a point to record what each planet has on it and record where repair drone stations and energy stations are.

When Star Trek is released BUY IT! It is the ULTIMATE, Best space game there is for any computers. It MAY even be supported with more galaxy disks. It will be to the ST as Star Raiders was to the 800. People will buy an ST just to play STAR TREK!!!!! (Star Trek is currently unreleased. The version I saw was probably a beta version. How this person got it I do not know.) I would urge all of you to buy this program! Please call Simon and Shuster and ask them to release Star Trek soon. Pre-order it!)

(EDITOR's NOTE: A later contact with SIMON and SHUSTER has resulted in an admission that the game is INDEED in development, and is pending final agreements with PARAMOUNT PICTURES. Release should be sometime this fall!)

Review ST

GIST (Antic Software)
Reviewed by Ed Seward
Reprinted from CURRENT NOTES, 1987

GIST is by Gary Levenberg and Lee Actor. The purpose of GIST is to provide an easy means of designing better sounds and then including them in a program. This is the product whose prototype was the basis of their column in the Winter START magazine.

The package comes with the GEM based sound editor, 50 sample sounds and the code necessary to use GIST for 5 C language systems: Alcyon C (and thus Mark Williams C), GST C, Lattice C and Megamax C. After some begging, pleading and grovelling I learned that Antic will be adding the code for using GIST with OSS' Personal

Pascal. This addition will be placed in the public domain as it will be useless without the GIST package itself.

On first viewing the directory of the GIST directory one sees five folders and 3 files. There is a folder labelled for four of the C's that contains the code for using GIST. There is a folder just containing the code fro the demo program and another folder containing the 50 sample 'SND' files. The three files are the GIST program, resource and documetation.

The first thing I tried was GIST.PRG the sound editor. The screen comes up with three boxes on the left side of the screen and the menu bar. The boxes allow one to play a sound or sounds in a continuous cycle and to vary the length of one cycle. The next box down allows one to set the duration of a sound. The botom box allows one to change the note being used for the sound or sounds. The menu bar has four main headings besides the 'ACC' column. The headings are 'File', 'Edit', 'Play' and 'Misc'. The 'File' heading is pretty standard. The 'Edit' offers one a reminder on quick commands on editing the volume, frequency or noise. Besides the quick commands one can also just double-click on the appropriate part of the display for a sound and one will be shown the editing screen for the volume frequency or noise.

The first I did was to load in one of the sample sound files. One should allow a LOT of time to waste with this. There isn't any problem - the sounds can be modified so easily that I spent some hours just fooling around with various combinations. While there are 50 sound samples included I must mention that through the monitor speaker about 15-20 of them sounded so alike as to be indistinguishable. That group is variations of a piano. The reason for this is that it makes it much easier to know which parameter to change. I found the way the editor is setup to be very freindly and simple to use. Within the editor one can load in up to three sound files at any one time. The sounds can be played either individually or 'ganged' so that all of them are used. I should mention before I forget that GIST will accept inout from a MIDI keyboard and play the sounds back through the MIDI also.

When a 'SND' file is loaded a window pops up displaying the ADSR (Attack, Decay, Sustain and Release) envelope, the LFO (Low Frequency Oscillator) for both frequency and volume, the frequency curve and the noise settings. All of these can be very easily edited using the mouse. I should mention that GIST makes use of three ADSR envelopes and three LFO's per sound channel. This replaces the single envelope generator that is burned into the sound chip.

Now, what would you use GIST for? Well, I sure hate to construct the code for sounds from scratch. Also, as I mentioned above GIST reprograms the sound chip and helps provide what the programmers NSQ - "Near Synthesizer Quality". If one is designing a game then one get easily get away from the 'Asteroids' type of sound effects which seems to be very common in the public domain and some commercial products. The disk is not copy-protected and the package works in both medium and high resolution. In my opinion, most people working on adding sounds to a program they are writing will benefit from using GIST both in time savings and the resulting quality of the sounds.

Review Eight

Koronis Rift
Lucasfilm Games Division
Created By Noah Falstein
Reviewed by Eric Plent
Reprinted from ZMAGAZINE, 1987

24 Febrius, 2249 - "For three days your Scoutcraft has been traveling through empty space, on it's way from one forsaken part of the galaxy to another. You're a technoscavenger, making a living searching for abandoned technological systems - but for all the luck you've had in the past month, you might as well be an intergalactic drifter. Psytek, your Science Droid Analyzer, is monitoring the instruments. There isn't much to do - not much, that is, until suddenly Psytek flashes an urgent message:"

"POWERFUL RADIATION FLUX DETECTED: COORDINATES 45:90 RELATIVE AZIMUTH AND ELEVATION."

Powerful is right! Your instruments indicate rads in the ten thousand range. "Any idea what it might be?" you ask.

"NEGTIVE. CHARTS INDICATE EMPTY SPACE FROM HERE TO STAR SYSTEM 583."

And so the game goes. This is how you stumble on to the strange and little known planet called Koronis Rift...

From movies to computer software, Lucasfilm has always been there with some of the best in entertainment for all ages. With the smash hit movie Star Wars, Lucasfilm started the ball rolling into the business. A few years ago Lucasfilm branched off once again and started the Lucasfilm Computer Games Division, bringing forth hit games such as BallBlazer, The Eidolon and this one, Koronis Rift.

Koronis Rift places you in the pilot seat of a small land Scoutcraft. searching for the

wreckage of abandoned technolgical systems that you can raid for old parts. Since these parts are worth something in the space junk market, you plan to sell them for credits. Of course, there are always SOME of the units that can be used for your ship. After all, you can expect the Guardian Saucers to put up a fight for those old abandoned hulks, since they are there to protect the Ancient technology from people such as you. Watch out! Two of them coming in! Shield at full power! Hellllpppp...!

Enough of this. On to the actual program and game play. Koronis Rift is a little like the old Arcade program BattleZone. You pilot your ship over the scrolling playfield while shooting everything in sight (at least, all of the Guardians in sight...don't shoot the Hulks.)

Since most of the time you will want the lowest level of play, the program will default to Rift 1. This level will give you a taste of the action without TOO many Guardians attacking. Drive around a bit to get used to the feel of the game. You will mostly need your trigger thumb, since you will almost always be attacked while trying to raid a hulk. The program will beep to let you know the Guardians are coming. You can move your target sight (a small crosshair) around the screen with the joystick. To fire, press the fire button.

Now you are ready to play. Re-start the game and get to level one. You will be lowered to the planet by a tractor beam, controlled by Psytek the robot. When you hit the ground the game has started. Press your joystick up and you will start moving forward. Notice the large object in front of you. This is your first hulk of the game (they put it there to let you get the hang of the game faster). Run right up to the ship and stop by pulling the joystick backwards. Now pull down again and press the fire button. You should see a little cursor light up on either "Call Ship" or "Loot Hulk". Select "Loot Hulk" to send the little Repo-Tech Robot out. It will collect anything it can from the ship and return it to you. You can than place that module in to your ship's system now, or wait and have Psytek examine it later (by 'Calling' the ship).

Let's have Psytek examine the module now to see what it is worth. Pull the joystick back again and select "Call Ship". The tractor beam will pull you in to the ship.

The scene will change now, showing you Psytek and his work area. This is where you come to find the value of a module, or to replace a Repo-Tech Robot (in case you happen to shoot it...it can be done (hehe)).

Position your cursor on the module you would like examined and press the fire button. Psytek will remove the unit from your ship and give you a status report of that unit's power level and value on the market. If you choose to sell that module, select "Disassemble" to get the credits. Now you can return to the game, save your position (in case you have a REALLY good game and would like return there the next time you play) load a saved position or quit the game.

Overall, Koronis Rift is a fast paced game that will keep you at the joystick for hours. If you liked Battle Zone in the arcade, I would recommend this game to you. While not quite up to the Vector graphics of the arcade version, this will do very nicely. Highly recommended!

Happy gaming!!!

Eight Bit Gem
by STEVE DUNPHEY, RI ACE

After finding the demo of GOS [also called GOSDUP as it replaced the normal DUP.SYS file-ED.] and seeing the interest that it generated I became anxious to speak with David Sullivan who wrote the program.

After attempting to call Mr. Sullivan to no avail on two occasions, I contacted ANTIC magazine. My hopes in doing this were that ANTIC would be familiar with David Sullivan, GOS or both. As it turns out ANTIC claimed never to have seen the program and also that David Sullivan was news to them.

Lets begin at the beginning. At ANTIC I spoke with a few clerk types before being connected with Charlie Jackson, ANTIC's editor online for CompuServe. He seemed very interested in a graphic operating system for the 8-bit ATARI, so much so in fact that he expressed a desire to obtain a copy immediatly by down loading it from the RIACE BBS. I gave Mr. Jackson the RIACE number and true to his word he got online and downloaded GOS the same afternoon. When I last spoke to Mr. Jackson it was understood that he would leave me a message on CompuServe regarding his success in locating David Sullivan and getting a more complete version of GOS.

I was back in touch with Mr. Jackson on Friday afternoon. He had indeed reached David Sullivan and was at the moment looking at a newer version of GOS that David Sullivan had sent him via David's BBS. He told me further more that David Sullivan had written still a third version that is in machine language, took up less memory and is 100% graphics. ANTIC went on to say that they were willing to purchase this GOS from David Sullivan if he failed in his efforts to reach an agreement with ATARI for purchase of same. Also ANTIC promised to credit RIACE with pointing out the benifits of this program to them.

Now I went ahead and gave David Sullivan a call. I told him over the modem who I was and that I had called ANTIC magazine. David came online and agreed to go voice for a chat. He said he was quite surprised to hear from ANTIC at this time since he had sent them a copy of GOS when he first wrote it as a demo way back in "85". He also sent a copy to ANALOG, CompuServe and GENIE. David said he told all of them that he was giving it away and they could do with it as they please. No response followed.

David explained how he had written this program in one evening to bring to a user's group meeting as a demo. He wanted to show it because on that night this particular group was showing an ST and an AMIGA. David thought it would be nice to show an 8-bit running on a graphic operating system. He placed it in the public domain and went to work on a newer version written in machine language that has many additional features.

His new version which is under consideration at ATARI as their new operating system is 100% graphics. It has windows and movable icons and David who owns both an 8-bit and an ST considers it to be a little faster than the ST version, while almost identical in looks and usage.

David Sullivan has written many programs for the 8-bit ATARI. On many occasions he has written a program for a specific user's group and allowed that group to do as they please with the program, whether that be to sell it or just distribute it under the user's group name. He said that perhaps he could do somthing like this for RIACE, since he was quite pleased that we had been the cause of renewed intrest in the GOS program via ANTIC magazine. He also said he hoped to be able to send us a sample of the new machine language version which is called DESKTOP.

Hardware

XEP80 (80-column card)
Atari Corp.
$79.95, 16K disk
(Review by ANTIC, excerpted from ANTIC ONLINE (CompuServe) by permission.

It's here.

Arriving at Antic just as we were about to go to press, the long-promised XEP80 80-column box is being manufactured at the Atari Corp.'s Taiwan manufacturing center and should be available in stores for $79.95 by the time you read this.

The XEP80 displays 80 columns and 24 rows of readable text on your screen. On monochrome monitors, this text is razor-sharp. It's also quite readable on a color monitor, though naturally the characters are smaller than standard 40-column Atari text. Either way, the XEP80 is far superior to any software-only commercial products that produce an 80-column display.

COMPATIBLE SOFTWARE

AtariWriter 80 and a new 80-column, single-density version of Atari's Silent Butler personal finance program will be the first commercial software that runs on the XEP80. However, early prototype versions of the XEP80 box were sent to major publishers of 8-bit software -- such as Batteries Included, Broderbund, XLEnt and OSS -- with the expectation that existing products will soon be updated for 80 columns.

Inexpensive 80-column trade-up prices for users of the existing AtariWriter Plus and Silent Butler will be offered by Atari, according to Skruch. But no prices for the software have been set as of this writing.

USING XEP80

The XEP80 is about the size of a 1030 modem (5 3/8 x 9 1/4 x 1-3/8 inches) and weighs in at two pounds. It can easily fit atop your disk drive.

The XEP80 connects to your Atari through either joystick port 1 or 2. An XL/XE RCA-jack video cable carries the signal from the back of the XEP80 to your monitor. (Atari says the XEP80 display will not be satisfactory on a televison set.)

Keeping the system running is a small 9-volt power supply, the same power unit used with the 2600 videogame system and the still-awaited Atari 1200-baud moderm. Note: The power supply that came with our prototype XEP80 tended to grow unusually hot.

The XEP80 also includes a parallel printer port that uses the same 25-pin cable as the ST. If you hold down the [SELECT] key when you boot your computer, the XEP80 will serve only as a parallel printer interface -- without turning on the 80-column display.

UTILITIES AND DEMOS

The disk that comes with the XEP80 contains the AUTORUN.SYS file which installs the handler (which is only about 200 bytes). Commented MAC/65-compatible source code for the handler is also included. Atari's Lane Winner is credited as the main designer of the XEP80 system.

The disk also features a number of impressive demonstration programs written in BASIC and assembly language, as well as detailed documentation and utility software for inserting

80-column handler rountines into your own programs.

The XEP80 handler introduces several new commands to Atari BASIC. These take the form of XIO statements which:

- Invert the screen colors (default is white text on a black background).

- Enable underlining.

- Produce a blinking cursor.

- Mix double-width or double-height text with standard-size text.

- Mix blinking text (any width or height) with standard text.

- Enable character-by-character horizontal scrolling with a POSITION statement and an XIO statement.

The XEP80 is immediately compatible with all software that supports E: calls -- such as Atari BASIC (versions A, B and C) and Atari DOS 2.5. During our tests, the XEP80 didn't work with DOS 2.0.

GRAPHICS

Built into the XEP80 is 8K of static RAM, which is used as a screen storage buffer to operate the display faster. The XEP80 has two complete character sets built in, the standard XL/XE special character set and Atari's international character set.

The XEP80 can draw high-resolution bit-mapped graphics

covering as much as half the screen. However, the 80-column drawing routines are much slower than standard 40-column drawing. It took five minutes to draw and fill a golfball-sized circle in Graphics 8.

Drawing isn't simple either. The PLOT and DRAWTO statements are not supported and text windows are not allowed. If your program crashes in the middle of one of these lengthy and complicated bit-map operations, the display remains in bit-mapped mode. You must reboot and start again.

SUMMARY

If you're serious about an 80-column display, the XEP80 won't disappoint you. The text is outstanding on monochrome monitors and acceptably readable on composite color monitors. Beginning and intermediate BASIC programmers will want to explore new ways to use the XEP80's additional XIO commands. Advanced BASIC and assembly language programmers will enjoy adapting the XEP80 handler to their favorite business software, word processor or telecommunications program.

Atari ST Technical

ST ERROR CODES
By Bob Whipple
Reprinted from J.A.C.S., March 87

Dear Editors,

I have had my 520ST for a few months now and I have encountered, several times, error messages that are not real 'self explaining'. A message that states "TOS ERROR #35" tells me zip! Can you supply me with some definitions??

In The Dark. Vincentown, N.J.

Dear In the Dark,

I hope you find these definitions to your liking. You are not the only person who has that missing page in their owner's manual. These error message #'s, were taken from the Atari ST-Internals book by Abacus.

ST ERROR CODE DEFINITIONS

-0	OK, no error
-1	General error
-2	Drive not ready
-3	Unknown command
-4	CRC error
-5	Bad request, invalid command
-6	Seek error, track not found
-7	Unknown media (invalid boot sector)
-8	Sector not found
-9	Write error
10	Write error
11	Read error
12	General error
13	Diskette write protected
14	Diskette was changed
15	Unknown device
16	Bad sector (during verify)
17	Insert diskette (for connected drive)
32	Invalid function number
33	File not found
34	Pathname not found
35	Too many files open (no more handles left)
36	Access not possible
37	Invalid handle number
39	Not enough memory
40	Invalid memory block address
46	Invalid drive specification
49	No more files

Last Hacks

IS THE 8-BIT DEAD?

By: John B. Sloop

Reprinted from Pacus Report, Apr. 87

Sure, we've been hearing it for a couple of years now, "The Atari 8-bit machine is dead". Although Atari denies this, I've compiled a few interesting facts, (note: I said facts, not rumors, which in the past is all that we had to go on), that demonstrate clearly to me that the 8-bit is dead.

For instance, if you insert a PAC-MAN cartridge upside-down into a 1200XL and turn it on, "Clyde" will appear, saying what sounds to me like "I buried an 8-bit!". Scarey, isn't it. There are many of these hidden clues all over, if you just look for them.

One of the latest pieces of software that Atari has put out for the 8-bits, was ATARI PLANETARIUM. Boot that program and look at the constellation ARA (which, by the way, means ALTAR in English) with the lines option engaged. Using the stars as dots and the lines as dashes, you can make out, in Morse Code, the phrase "8 B 8 IF", which of course means that the 8-bits would be eight years old IF they had lived. How can you argue with proof like that? This could not just be an accident.

These hints of the death of the 8-bits have been coming for quite some time. Take a look at the cover of ANALOG #44. There you will see a picture of what appears to be an operation being performed on an ATARI ST. And what is found inside, looking like a malignant tumor? A 130XE! Although that is pretty blatent, there is also a subtle clue on that cover. In yellow on that cover are the names of three articles inside the magazine for the 8-Bits, "Arm Your Atari", "Ramcopy", and "8-Bit Parallel Interface". The initials of these titles are "A Y A R 8 B P I", which is an anagram for RIP 8-B YAA!". They are not only stating that the 8-bits are dead, but even that they are glad of it.

Still not convinced? You people are hard to please. OK, grab your copy of the April 87 ANTIC. Look at the cover and what do you see? A bunch of IRS men chasing a couple of guys carrying banners that say "130XE". Now think, what does that mean? I SAID THINK!! That's right, only two things are inevitable, DEATH and Taxes. What at first glance appears to be a simple "tax-time" issue, in fact is clear proof that the 8-bits are dead.

These are only a few examples of what you can find if you only look with an open mind. But most people don't see these things, because they don't want to face the facts.

I can't understand why Atari doesn't just come right out and announce that the 8-bits are dead. It has been proven in the past that these charades don't work. When Elvis died in 1963, no one believed that fat lookalike they got to replace him was really Elvis. When the lookalike died in 1977, no one bothered to try to get another replacement. When Paul McCartney died in a car-train accident in the late 60's, the remaining Beatles denied it, while all the time giving clues to his death in songs and on album covers, much like the clues showing up for Atari's 8-bits today. We aren't stupid, we know what's going on. We also know that Andy Kaufman is working for Atari, but that's another story.

Like I mentioned before, death and taxes ARE inevitable. So lets raise our glasses to our fallen friend, and also toast our new found friend, the ST. "The King is dead, long live the King".

BLOOM COUNTY by BERKE BREATHED (Copyright 1986)
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FACING FATAL OBSOLESCENCE IS A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR A P.C. ... OFTEN INVOLVING THREE DISTINCT PHASES...
DOOMED? I'M DOOMED?
"DENIAL"...
NO WAY! CAN'T BE! IT'S A BIG MISTAKE! THEY MUST'VE MEANT AN I.B.M. ...
"BARGAINING"...
OH PLEASE, GREAT VIDEO GOD... GIVE ME JUST SIX MORE MONTHS... AND NO MORE HACKING!! I SWEAR! I SWEAR!!
... AND FINALLY... "ACCEPTANCE."
SUDDENLY... LIFE HAS BECOME SO..SO SPECIAL... SO MEANINGFUL... LISTEN!... THE LOONS!... CAN YOU HEAR THE LOONS?..
12-6

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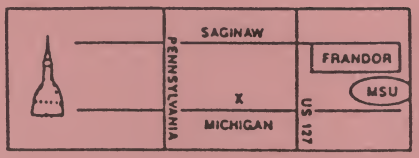

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G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) -- G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

Atari News

...AND COMMENT, compiled by JOHN NAGY

CHICAGO ATARIFEST: CANCELLED. The word came first through ATARI USER GROUP REP SANDY AUSTIN, then from several vendors who were planning to show, then from insiders plannning the MAGIC show for DETROIT, then, finally, from some of the CHICAGO clubs themselves. Too little help, too late, plus vendor holdouts, made it impossible to meet the deadline and bottom line. Meanwhile, DETROIT's show looks all the stronger as it will now be the ONLY midwest ATARIFEST this year. BE THERE, August 29-31. Full details NEXT month.

ATARI CORPORATION STOCK, first released in November of last year at about $11.50 a share, is at the time of this writing selling at about $15. Of course, that's only impressive if you know that the stock SPLIT two-for-one in June. That's more than doubling in only six months.

Those PRODUCTS: Everybody at ATARI still swears that ALL the currently announced products are in prbduction and should be AVAILABLE "by the time you read this"... or soon... or certainly by the end of the summer.

OPTIMIZED SYSTEMS SOFTWARE (OSS) has a new TOOLKIT for BASIC XL, adding all the power of BASIC XE except the EXTENDED PROGRAM AREA. The new extensions file for BASIC XL will include those amaxing add-ons like SORTUP and SORTDOWN, to name a few. By the way, OSS also says NO RUNTIME PACKAGE for BASIC XE will be released, so don't expect too many "extended" PD gems to surface.

Another coup for USER GROUPS: SPRINGBOARD SOFTWARE, makers of NEWROOM, CERTIFICATE MAKER, etc. for almost everybody but ATARI, has decided to rethink their position and is prepping an 8-bit ATARI version of NEWSROOM, slated for fall release. A letter writing campaign was initiated by several user groups and carried forward by ANTIC MAGAZINE. ST versions of all SPRINGBOARD products are either already being shipped or are being developed.

MINDSCAPE SOFTWARE, makers of some remarkable software for the ST, has bought out CBS SOFTWARE and has re-released some titles from the CBS collection. PLUTOS, a fabulous MINDSCAPE arcade game for the ST, is now legitimately released and features "lots of" enhancements over the pirate beta version that has been floating around BBS's as a "public domain" item. Many clubs put the game in their software libraries, not knowing it was not PD.

First it was ATARI PLANETARIUM, now, AUTODUEL, a new game from ORIGIN SYSTEMS, is said not to run on INDUS or ICD DOUBLER equipped ATARI 1050 disk drives due to a new copy protection scheme. More and more, these are turning into USE protection schemes. Hardware-specific software is a growing trend- be sure you get a return privilege from a reputable dealer to protect YOURSELF.

NATIONAL REVIEW magazine, July 3, 1987: "Soviet fad for personal computers is wearing off. Problems: the machines are lousy, and the Soviets forgot to make software. Exception: CHess champ Gary Kasparov donated 26 ATARI 130's to the KOMYUTER youth club." Anybody plan to follow up and see if the Iron Curtain will pass PD SOFTWARE?

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Inside MAM: THE CLUBS- PAGE

C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
G.A.G. (FLINT)	9
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	11
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	12
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	13
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	13
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	14

FEATURES:

ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT	COVER
MORE ATARI NEWS	4
VIEWPOINT: NO RIP 8-BIT	15
ATARI AT THE CES	16
ANTIC CES PRODUCT REPORT	20
DETAISL ON THE XFSS1	21
FORTH STAGE - Learning guide	22
ST NOTES- MODEM REVIEW	23
ICD TOUR ARTICLE	24
REGENT BASE REVIEW	25
MORE MIO MADNESS - Info	26
FUNSTUFF- MAMPUZ!	29
LAST HACKS - Randy Mooney VS BBS's	30

M.A.M NEEDS YOU... and so does your CLUB. We go through ARTICLES like there is no tommorrow, and need ADVERTISERS to make MAM LARGER and economical for the clubs to get it.. Contact your club officers if you have an article or a prospective advertiser!

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

First thing, let me say that we are sorry that this issue is behind schedule. Contributions came late, the editors (Rich and Judy Barnes) were unavailable due to overtime and evening work, and the usual helpers have been vacationing. The same conditions also continue to be the reason for our less-than-40- page size... lack of contributions and ads.

Four out of our seven groups will NOT be meeting this or next month anyway, so timing is not as critical for most readers anyway. August MAY again be late and/or small, so be forewarned...

Jeff Bone has been busy contacting the may dealers and manufacturers I talked to at the CES, and it looks like FALL will be big for ADVERTISING, so things may well pick up then.

Speaking of the CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW, almost ALL of our article contributions this month were about it! This lead to a huge editing mess, as most of the articles covered much of the same ground. I have pooled all the information and tried to make it into a few specific articles, with credits going to all the contributing writers. I hope this doesn't offend any of them, but the alternatives are either a lot of very similar articles or dropping some altogether. This way, at least we are getting as much information out as possible.

* * *

The CHICAGO ATARIFEST, once said to be in UNION trouble, later determined NOT to be, is NOW reported to be CANCELLED, or at least POSTPONED until next year.

Scheduled to be held the last weekend in JULY, it is NOT happening due to a failure of the participating clubs in the CHICAGO area to follow through on their individual commitments for the show. Sources closely involved say that materials were developed late if at all, mailed even later, and generally, the groups felt they could NOT be ready in time. Even finding out about the CANCELLATION has been a challenge, as no official word has been posted in the expected areas by the groups responsible. Instead, I have heard it from several vendors that expected to be going to the show, plus ATARI's SANDY AUSTIN was spreading the word via references on GEnie.

Although it is sad that more involvement or co-operation was not forthcoming in time to save the CHICAGO ATARIFEST, but it IS

understandable. Most events like this are the result of the efforts of a dedicated few, despite the widespread "official" duties and responsibility. A show like these ATARIFESTs can easily become too much for the hardworking core.

The failure of the CHICAGO show is just more evidence that ATARI club-goers are more and more a CONSUMER group and less and less an ACTIVITY group. That's not necessarily a BAD thing, but it IS a change worth noting and dealing with. In fact, we MUST deal with it effectively and change the focus of our groups to match what can be realistically achieved, or will we will not be here tommorrow'.

Hopefully, at least the DETROIT show will be even better and bigger as a result of the misfortune of CHICAGO. It seems that most of the vendors and prospective visitors that now WON't be able to go to CHICAGO will now BE CERTAIN to make it to DETROIT, which will also be the first ATARIFEST to run THREE DAYS. Plans are reported to be coming along well, piloted by the MAGIC ATARI CLUB. We will give you the final details about the DETROIT show NEXT month, as it will be held the last weekend in AUGUST. We wish them luck and offer what support we can... spare!

"GOD, give me the STRENGTH to CHANGE those things that I can...

...the SERENITY to cope with the things I cannot change...

... and the WISDOM to KNOW THE DIFFERENCE between the two!"

(often overheard - or thought - at Officer's meetings of clubs everwhere....)

Atari News

A new software-only IBM EMULATOR has been released that claims 99.95% compatibility with MS-DOS programs, and a 80% execution speed on the ST. It's called PC:DITTO, and people are already raving about it. For $80, the program may be all anyone really needs in the way of BIG BLUE operation on their ST. Reviews are universally glowing. Contact AVANT GARDE SYSTEMS, 381 Pablo Point Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32225. Rumor is that the same company will put out a $350 HARDWARE external IBM emulator in a few months!

Also new in PC EMULATION: HAPPY version 7.1! New software is/has been shipped to registered HAPPY owners. Yes, the same modification that has allowed thousands of ATARI users to make "backups" of copyprotected software, as well as adding true double density and ultra-fast speed to the ATARI 1050 disk drive NOW allows you to READ AND WRITE MS-DOS disks. It won't make programs run on the other machine, but data files (like word processing and program code for editing) port perfectly onto SINGLE SIDED formatted IBM disks. ATARI end-of-line to ASCII carriage return/linefeed translation is a option. You can't format in MS DOS on the HAPPY, nor read or write double-sided disks, but that's only a small hindrance. I now can take work to and from the office, and watch the reactions when my co-workers ask what model IBM I have at home... Oh, yes HAPPY software version 7.1 also allows many more types of copyprotected disks to be copied without needing a "runtime HAPPY", meaning that they are true COPIES, not translations as in the version 7. Contact HAPPY COMPUTERS, Box 1268, Morgan Hill CA, 95037, or call (408) 779-3830.

HAPPY for the ST? Yes, but not yet. Word has it that a CART version of a HAPPY software package will be released for the ST that will allow a "photocopy" of any disk... ANY DISK... ANY FORMAT... to be made in an ST. Yes, AMIGA, PC, ANYTHING. Sounds interesting! Just more proof that the ATARI is the machine that can be ANYTHING if it tries!

MORE EMULATOR NEWS: The "ST TRANSFORMER" ATARI 8-bit emulator for the ST that you read about here in COMPUTER SHOPPER will shortly be published by ANALOG MAGAZINE. Scheduled for August or September printing, DAREK MIHOCKA's emulator will be free for distribution, and will include documented source code in hopes of further enhancements by other programmers. It appears that the "print" version will NOT have PLAYER-MISSLE GRAPHICS included because of too many bugs in those routines. DAREK expects that to be one of the first revisions after the original release.

Although the ST TRANSFORMER issue may be resolved, there seems a growing attitude at ATARI that the USER might be the enemy. NEIL HARRIS, ATARI's main product man, referred to the several user groups pushing for the 8-bit emulator as "trouble makers", called DAREK MIHOCKA a "TWERP", "a pain in the ...", and a "lousy programmer" during his speaking engagement with the CHICAGO area user groups during the CES. He has also accused users of "viciousness" in messages on GEnie telecommunication system when they questioned ATARI's delivery on product promises. Lets hope this attitude is specific to NEIL, and that his recent vacation has brightened his outlook. After all, we all want the same thing: the best performance out of our ATARI.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA ATARI

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
P.O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasur.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr.	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
XL/XE Librian.	Bill Johnson	675-7166
Publ. Librarn.	Richard Evans	351-2381
ST Publ. Libr.	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Cor.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coordn.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

President's Corner
by Leo Sell

Somehow as I write this, I'm thinking that I'm rather typical of the summer computer user. My computer time has cut way back so that I can do those wonderful homeowner duties like scraping and painting, fixing roofs, trimming trees, remodelling and so on. Stick in some weekends away, vacations and just plain exhaustion and the old Atari is just pining away.

John Nagy and I went to the CES in Chicago last month. Didn't see much that impressed me, except that I think Atari is poised to make barrels ful of money off of the "NEW" XE game system. For Atari users and user groups, looking for support from Atari, I think things look dim. Their attitude increasingly seems to be, "We have your money already. Go away so we can sell stuff to someone else".

This attitude of indifference underlines the need for Atari user groups. Frankly people, groups like ours are the only support you can realistically expect. And of course, as

always, you'll only get something out if you put something in.

On the encouraging side, MOST third party developers we saw are either developing or plan to develop , software for the ST. The ST is more and more becoming the computer of choice.

Speaking of choices, there are rumors going around that the corporation I work for, having a close relationship with Big Blue, will offer a fantastic deal on IBM PS 2 systems. The intial cost would be around $1200. However, I don't plan to get one since the ST now has IBM emulation available from software, and I can get a far more powerful setup by sticking with the ST if I want to shell out $1200.

Yes, you read right. The name of the product and company escapes me, but GOOD IBM emulation from software was shown at the recent Comdex. Writers in the Trade are very impressed. With an add-on 5.25 drive, you could have the best of both worlds.

Well, I'm too warm and my family and I are getting ready for camping this weekend, so Atari time is over.

The list of jobs that need to be filled is below. I am especially anxious to fill the Publicity and the Advertising postitions. We need to cut costs, increase revenue and bring in people, so those positions could really help us out.

The following positions are open:

Publicity Manager
Advertizing Manager
Publications Librarian
Newsletter Editor
Assistant Disk Librarians

Meeting Minutes

JUNE ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

On a hot, sunny Saturday in June, I expected a very light turnout for the CHAOS ST meeting. But 17 people showed up, one more than last month (although about half of the mid-winter peak). This meeting there were several who didn't own ST's, but were considering a purchase. Steve Brooks opened with a discussion of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) that he and other CHAOS members attended in Chicago. The CES is covered elsewhere in this magazine.

Peter Miller talked about the upgraded VIP, which has the GEM interface. Since people were interested, Peter agreed to show this at a future meeting.

Commercial games STARGLIDER and HIGH ROLLER were demo'd by Greg Gaskill. We also had a surprise disk of the month from Sally Nagy. Included were BARNYARD, an educational game that matches remembered squares, like concentration, PICSWITCH version 7, which converts NEO, DEGAS, and TINY files, MILEBORN, a French card game, and FOLDERXX, which gets around the 40 folder limit to allow up to 999 folders. (A folder is like a directory, for you IBM'ers). I'll close this month with a tip for sophisticated users. Did you know that the ST makes one heck of a Tektronix terminal emulator? The people at the Cyclotron lab have picked up a few monochrome 1040's to use as Tektronix emulators. More than that, they said that they ordered the first one mail order after 3 pm on a Friday, and had it delivered at noon on Monday! Once they tried it out, they got a couple more. I'm not going to claim that the ST can make a dent in the PC compatible business world, but there are niches where the ST can be the best for the money (power without the price).

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THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by John Nagy

This month begins my third year as SYSOP of the CHAOS BBS. I want to thank ALL our callers for making it a pleasure to run the system. It has and continues to bring me into contact with interesting ATARI people from all over the world.

Summer brings odd things to BBS'ing. Lots of our REGULARS don't call for weeks on end, but we get lots of new long-distance traffic. Lately, it's been more INTERNATIONAL than usual.

We are getting quite a following of CHAOS BBS users in parts of CANADA, and even LONDON, ENGLAND. My recent plugs for our plentiful UPGRADE INFO in my COMPUTER SHOPPER column has helped, I'm sure. Anyway, many of these callers are bringing interesting files with them, and they in turn are making our download section bristle with intrigue. John Lewis is trying to keep up with the 8-bit contributions, and John Baker is handling the ST files as usual. The best of what we get plus some remarkable goodies from almost everywhere are passed on to you in the CHAOS DISK-OF-THE-MONTHs, so you no- modem folks won't miss out... and the rest of you don't HAVE to download everything, de-archive, reset DOS, make menus, etc. It's all done on the DOM for either the 8 or 16 bit machines.

Our BBS software continues to change as I add more features... the latest one, showing CITY, STATE in messages and "LAST CALLERS LIST" has greatly increased the interest in the message bases... many callers never realized WHERE they were talking to. More SPECIAL-PURPOSE message bases and E-MAIL (automatic when you log on, so it can't be missed) are next on the adgenda.

GUY HURT and his trivia game (Base 4, FUN AND GAMES) have been widely read if not widely participated in... and SIGHTS AND SOUNDS (Base 5) is virtually not being used. CHECK INTO THEM, particulary SIGHTS AND SOUNDS as it would be great to get more current MOVIE REVIEWS online there. There have been several added recently that almost no one has read!

Remember, the CHAOS BBS offers a great way to get out of the blistering sun for a few minutes each day... Glad to have you visit! We run our 10 meg system for ST and 8-bit ATARI users at 300 and 1200 baud, 24 hours, 517-371- 1106.

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT!

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
by John Baker

Hot summer temps and explosive Atari bargains have arrived in force. Rumor has it that several of the massive specially constructed warehouses built by Atari to hold their latest vaporware products are bulging at the seams. Atari will soon be emptying these warehouses, and you the Atari user will get a shot at these goodies. The latest vaporware creations (besides the MEGA ST, Clones, modems, etc), which are old news, are causing quite a stir. These hot new items are: An ST emulator for the 400, A plug in cartridge enabling the use of a 410 cassette recorder for a 20 meg storage device, A new 3 sided density and one quarter disk drive, A new memory resident 8-bit DOS that is only 64K in size, and the real show stopper: The blitter/unix laser modem cd-rom printer cassette calculator!!!! Wow!!! What more can I say! Atari has outdone themselves this time. And the best part is, that they have promised delivery on these items within the next week!!! Vaporware fever has gripped the nation!

Impending press releases are said to indicate that Atari, to show their appreciation and support of loyal Atari users groups, will make initial shipments of this fantastic vaporware selection available ONLY to their valued user group members. Atta boy Jack! I knew you really liked us all along. Atari officials could not be contacted to confirm any of these rumors because they were all "still on the boat", personally escorting their new "offerings" from Taiwan. Hopefully more details will be released soon.

What we can confirm though, is the fact that decent software is still continually showing up for atari users owning 8-bit and ST machines. The warm weather and associated increase in outdoor activity has led to the usual slump in member attendance at CHAOS meetings. Although, it's kinda hard to put a computer meeting over a weekend at the beach. People not attending these meetings though are missing out on first shot at some great new software for their machines.

New files are appearing regularly on the BBS as well as exclusive additions to our library. Bill Johnson, for the 8-bit, and Sally Nagy, for the ST group, are spending considerable time working on their respective sections to keep you up to date on hot new items.

Our ST library is growing with each passing week, which necessitated a re-work of the ST

library listing. A preliminary copy was passed out at the last meeting. The final update and complete ST index should be available at this months meeting. You need the new listing if you plan to purchase ST disks.

Stay current with whats happening with your respective machines by attending the CHAOS 8-bit and ST meetings. See you there.

ST LIBRARY
BY SALLY NAGY

For those of you who missed our last meeting of the STING (St Interest Group), I will explain what has been happening in the Library.

The library is now divided and organized in the following way: UTILITIES SECTION, A-Communications, B-Languages, C-General, D-Business/Financial, E-Applications; GAMES SECTION, A-Adventure, B-Thinking, C-Arcade, D-GFA Basic/Basic, E-Monochrome; DEMOS SECTION, Pictures, Sound/Music and Graphic Display; EDUCATION SECTION; and TEXT SECTION.

Many of our library disks have "ARCed" (archived for space saving) files. When there are ARCed files on a particular disk you will also find the files to de-ARC them.

The new disks for JULY are each as full as practical, and are as follows:

PICS #9-12 -- These are in the TINY format with viewer. (There are pictures of Tweety, Coyote, Startrek Crew and many more.)

SOUND/MUSIC #5 a demo of Midisoft's METATRAK. Try this out before buying the program commerically.

GRAPHIC DISPLAY #6 -- A great demo in that it shows off the power of the ST. Many of the files available for the ST are demoed.

UTILITIES A4 -- This disk features Citadel's BBS. If you are planning on starting a BBS grab this disk. It also has COLORBBS TEXT, X,Y,Z MODEM TEXT, and the newest HOTLIST of ST BBS's across the country.

UTILITIES B8 -- A disk full of Pascal and Modula_2 text and source files. Also some helpful hints from OSS.

UTILITIES B9 -- Are you tried of ST BASIC? Try TINY BASIC. Included on the disk is its Source and Doc file. Did you get LOGO with your ST and are wondering how to write some programs? You are in luck, this disk has lots of LOGO files. Some for Color and some for Monochrome users.

UTILITIES B10 -- Can't seem to get enough "C" source files and docs of compiled "C" programs? This disk is for you.

UTILITIES B11 -- On this disk you will find a demo of 4XForth with docs.

UTILITIES C10 -- Try out two new (de)ARC files, some different formatters, ramdisks, alarm clock and more.

UTILITIES D7 -- Has demos and text on DB Man, Expert Opinion, and HD Base.

UTILITIES D8 -- Has hints and demo of VIP Professional.

UTILITIES D9 -- Is a demo of Zoomracks II.

UTILITIES D10 -- A demo of Easy Draw.

UTILITIES E4 -- Is for those who have Publishing Parnter. On this disk there is a font editor, fonts, and printer drivers.

GAMES A3 -- Has Infocom playable demos of ZORK1, PLANETFALL, INFIDEL, WITNESS. Hints for playing ZORK 2 & 3, WITNESS, SUNDOG, and TIMEBANDITS. You can also create your own adventure game.

GAMES B6 -- On this disk you will find AZARIAN (a demo), SCORE4, ST_SLOTS written in GFA BASIC (RUN ONLY FILE included on disk), CRAPS.PRG, and POKER.PRG.

... and there's more where THEY came from!

******NOTICE!!!******

THE NEW ST LIBRARY CATALOG HAS BEEN RELEASED! Eight pages of great ST disks. Get yours at any CHAOS MEETING, or if you can't make it, give JOHN BAKER a call at (517) 641-4430 and he will see that you get one in the mail right away.

We told you before that C.H.A.O.S. was RENTING their entire DISK LIBRARY... Well, we STILL ARE, but the rate has changed slightly and now may be even MORE attractive to clubs and individuals. RENT our close to 250 disk 8-bit library OR our nearly 100 disk ST LIBRARY for a MONTH for only $6.5!!! Or BOTH for $100! These are ALL PRIME programs, fully catagorized and tested, with documentation, as you have come to expect from CHAOS.

Take your time and copy whatever you want, then return the library within the month! Contact JOHN BAKER at the number above for more information... those who have rented the library already have been THOUGHLY PLEASED... you CAN'T beat the VALUE!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Presidential Mumblings for July
by Jim Steele

Well, here we go again with another month's foolishness. The big hoopla this time is the CES reports sure to be in this issue somewhere. Personally, I was disappointed with the news from Chicago. I'm becoming convinced that the Tramiel Atari cares very little for 8-bit owners. Make sure you read Jerry's reports from CES. The ANTIC online reports seemed to lack a certain reality. (In my humble opinion!)

The GAG officers election is comming up once again, in October. I urge you all to consider running for a post. I admitted at the June meeting that I will not serve a 4th term as President. In fact, I probably should not have taken it this time. Most of you know that when I moved up to the 16bit world I chose the Amiga over the ST. I was convinced that the loyal 800's wouldn't be relegated to the legendary closet. (Where all old toys end up.) But I was wrong. If you see your system as a means to an end (a tool), then the venerable 800 still can perform usefull work. (Like the label on this newsletter,eh?) But I've always seen my system as a hobby. Gotta have the latest and greatest, and unfortunately the 800 isn't old enough to be a "Classic" like, say, a Model T Ford. At any rate, I believe I've heard some mutterings from someone who's willing to take on the task of President.

Now for the rest of the crew, well, we'll just have to see what develops. Remember, if someone doesn't do it... It won't get done. It wouldn't hurt to give some new blood a chance, and give the old blood a rest. Along the same lines, be sure to check in with Jerry if you can help out as a gofer at the Atari Magic show. Should be fun. We also need more articles from you for the newsletter. Review something, write a program, tell how to do something, or whatever. If you can't upload to CHAOS, send it to FACTS, and I'll forward it. No modem (shame on you ;-)) send it on disk. We really want articles by the group members.

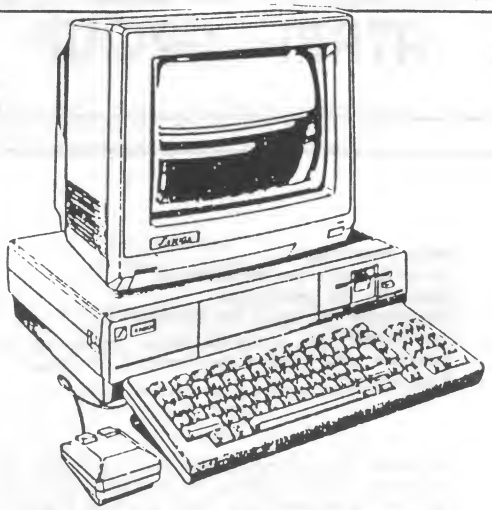
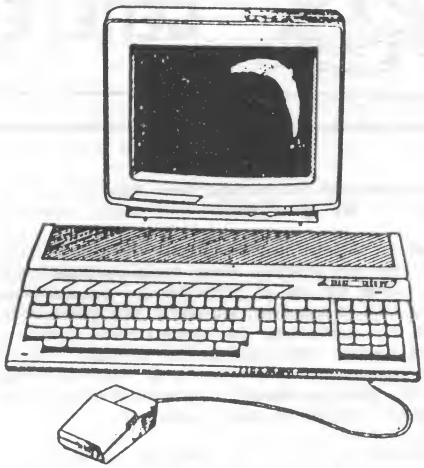
Back to the business at hand. Just a reminder that there will be no August meetings. Turn the computer off, go outside and soak up some rays. See ya in September.

Next Meetings:
July 8, 6:30 pm Neithercut
August- no meetings
September 9, 6:30 pm Neithercut
September 26, 10am National Computer Clinic
October 14, 6:30pm Neithercut (Officer Elections!)

Genesee Atari Group serves Flint and the Genesee county area. Membership dues are $15/yr. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (except August) at the Neithercut school 2010 Crestbrook, Flint,MI.
Contact: GAG c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Sq. Flint,MI 48504
If joining by mail, make checks payable to Jim Steele, thank you for your support....

GAG VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!
by Jerry Cross

The Michigan Atari General Information Conferance (MAGIC) will be hosting an Atari show August 28-30 at the Southfield Hilton Hotel. As co-sponsors of this show, the Genesee Atari Group is looking for members to help with the show. We need at least 15 GAG members who can spend at least five hours helping to set up booths, watch the crowd, answer questions, and many other jobs. We will also need people to work in the GAG booth at the show, to sell disks, newsletters, and to supply information about our club. Volunteers will get free admission to ALL THREE days of the show, including all concerts, and seminars. You will also get a free Atari-Magic T-Shirt! Our club will receive a free booth at the show in exchange for your help. Please lend a hand! I guarantee you will have a great time! I will try to form some carpools for those members who need transportation to Detroit. Just let me know if you need a lift. If you are interested, please contact Jerry Cross immediately! I will need to know what days and times you are available, and what jobs you can work. Call me at 736-4544, or leave a note on my BBS (736-3920).

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WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST
SEPT 8 TOPIC ANNOUNCED IN SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Meeting Minutes

WAUG MEETING SUMMARY: JUNE 9, 1987

The proposed WAUG Charter of Organization was ratified by a unanimous vote of all members present. Two changes were accepted by the membership present at the meeting. "The impeachment of an officer can only be achieved by a 2/3 vote of the quorum of members." There was also a clarification of the officer election procedure in how to resolve a "No-Clear-Winner" situation.

The first official election of WAUG officers was held. Here are the winners of these 'hotly contested' positions.

President	Mike Olin
Vice President	Pattie Snyder-Rayl
Secretary	Doug Feldman
Treasurer	Bob Carlini
Newsletter Editor	Bill Rayl
8-bit Librarian	Mike Pieronek
ST Librarian	Bruce Urbanski

According to the WAUG Charter, all officers are voting members of the Executive Board (EB). The EB will meet during August to make plans for future meeting activities. The EB will also discuss arrangements for suitable facilities for the September meeting.

The retiring Treasurer, Doug Feldman, presented his final membership and financial status report. There were 39 active members in WAUG. This did not include 3 memberships which expired as of the June meeting.

Doug explained to the membership that the reasonably healthy financial situation was primarily due to the convenient use of Wines Elementary School for meetings this year. Starting in September, we should expect to pay $25 or more for room rental fees.

Members commented that the Wines Teacher's Lounge was not large enough to conveniently seat more than 30 - 35 persons. Pattie Snyder-Rayl volunteered to investigate meeting arrangements at E.M.U. Bob Parker volunteered to investigate arrangements at U.M.

Finally, the Annual Flea Market was held at 8:30 pm. Most WAUG members seemed to enjoy purchasing each others unwanted hardware/software at bargain hunter prices. The most common equipment for sale seemed to be Atari cassette recorders (3) followed by Atari 1025 printers (2). Doug Feldman was especially delighted to purchase the Atari Logo Programming Cartridge. He promises a complete review for the September Newsletter. In between demos of newly purchased 8-bit software, Mike Pieronek was working furiously to copy 8-bit library disks for several members.

This very hectic meeting ended with a large turnout at our monthly gathering of 'AFTER-WAUG', held at the Cottage Inn.

See you all in September!!!

WAUG
WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

TREASURE CHEST BBS: 313-439-2816 (1200/300)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 39 W. Main #6, Milan, MI 48160

BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

C.E.S. REVIEW
by Chuck Steele

Well the long hot days of summer are here again. Some of us are out swimming or boating or watering our lawns... or fun things like mowing the grass. If it's too hot, some of us come indoors and play around on the computer.

Last month I took in the C.E.S. show in Chicago to see what was happening in Atari land. The good news was that Atari had the biggest exhibit for home computers. The theme of their exhibit was Fly with Atari. A pretty young lady gave me a pair of Atari Wings and if I had stayed in line I could have flown the ST! Atari had a projection TV set up with a cockpit mock-up of a Piper 181 Cherokee. The controls were wired into an ST. The effect as you sat in the cockpit was very much like being in the real thing. Of course the software was the new Flight Simulator from SubLOGIC. Flight Simulator II is one of my favorite programs on my 8 is enough machine.

Atari also had the tunnel of game machines. I walked through it, and my heart didn't skip any beats. Hey what can I say, game machines are.... game machines. However most of us in the clubs have COMPUTERS!! So now I'm out of the tunnel and in the world of ST's. The whole rear of the booth was STs. They even had the new IBM clone! But it wasn't running. Sam Tramiel walked up and was looking at the clone and about that time the crowd pushed me back. It was crowded. I looked around to see any 8 bit machines. Off in a lonely corner and almost forgotten was a 130XE running the planetarium program. (Sigh)

Now for the bad news. Next I thought I would browse around the software vendor booths and see what was new. Saw IBM software, saw Apple software, saw TRS software, even saw Commodore stuff and they didn't even show up in Chicago. I had to look pretty hard to find some Atari software. It was a little scary. Is Atari being boycotted? Sure looked that way to me.

Anyway.... I still like my 8 bit, but all this has made me re-read the Last Hacks from the June issue. I wonder, maybe I should look at that old ANALOG #44! Well if I go on any longer we will be into religious philosophy. So till next time... many happy bits.

BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
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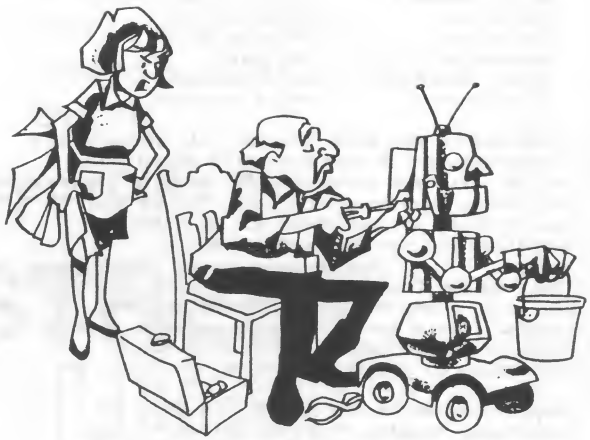
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024



"You'll go to any extreme to avoid taking out the garbage, won't you?"

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Meeting Minutes

During our June meeting we spent considerable time discussing the possibility of selling ads for the newsletter. We are looking for someone to chair a committee to be in charge of this project. It was felt this would be the best way to keep the dues cost down. The alternative is to raise our dues by several dollars annually.

As you saw in the last newsletter we have decided not to meet in July and August but are looking forward to seeing you at our September meeting.

I am interested in getting together with a few fellow GRASS members and visiting the meetings of the other Atari clubs in the area. Why not all bring our calendars to the September meeting and we will set something up! Maybe we can steal some good ideas to try to make our club meetings a little more profitable for everyone.

I see it is possible to rent libraries from other clubs.... perhaps we could get some help and do that this fall and add to our library!

Be thinking of some good ideas to bring to the September meeting and have great summer!

"With this computer, I'm interconnected with all other gurus, so I can give you a more reliable version of truth."

Presidential Address

by DANIEL YOUNGS

June! Summer time, sun, beach, outdoors, maybe the computer dosn't get as much attention this time of year as it does other times. I am writing this letter before our meeting again! It seems as though this is getting to be a habit... So I'll tell you what I THINK we will discuss at this month's (LAST month when you read this!) meeting.

*Lloyd Keller will do a demo on Silent Service.

*We are going to take a summer break in the month of July and August. Our attendance has been down and we feel that we won't have very many people at our meetings. So NO MEETING in July and August!

*I just talked to Frank, and it seems as though our BBS will be in operation by this weekend (with a little luck!) so we should have a number for you soon.

*If you have dues that are due please pay them we are having alot of people that are not up to date and the club needs the money to pay for our news letter and BBS. If you know anyone that has an Atari computer but not member of the club lets get them signed up!

*From what I understand the library is done. Steven should have it at the meeting for your pleasure!

*We will have the latest Analog Disk and we will also have Turbo Basic and a copy of GRIP for the disk of the month. If you don't have Turbo basic you are missing a great program. I have done away with Atari Basic and am using only Turbo, it's great!

See ya there!

GKAUG meets on the second Saturday of the month (taking the summer off... will start again in September) at 11:00 . Our meetings are held at Kalamazoo College in Dewing Hall the Dues are $20.00 per year. Daniel Youngs, GKAUG PRESIDENT, 388-3164

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING: The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

ELECTIONS MEETING RESCHEDULED INTO AUGUST!
August 8th at 2:00 pm.

*** ***

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk Lib.	790-1980
Lance Middleton	ST Disk Librarian	
Ron Hoffman	Assistant ST Disk Lib.	

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

OK, everybody had their time off (no meeting in JUNE and not enough at the JULY meeting to have the ELECTIONS), so ELECTIONS are RESCEDULED for AUGUST. The people chosen will be leading the club for the next year, so SHOW UP and put in your two cents worth! If you don't like the way things are being done, then volunteer yourself... you're sure to like the way things are when YOU are in charge!

The offices open for nomination for TAG are:

President Secretary/Treasurer 8-bit Disk Librarian ST Disk Librarian Editor

In particular, we are looking for a new ST disk librarian, as Lance now has other commitments, and an Editor for the newsletter. The Editor would be responsible for writing the Hot Flashes and Relics to Relish and for organizing the newsletter (I would still supply the Presidential Address if I'm still president after elections) and the ST Notes column).

Also, anyone interested in writing a regular 8-bit column (you need a modem to transfer it to the Editor) please feel free to volunteer.

If you read the MAM June issue very carefully you may have noticed something new. There is now a classified ad section which is available FREE to all members. The only rules are that the article being sold must be computer related, and the ad must be to me no later than the 20th of the month.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of July will find TAG taking a look at the various methods of backing up software. While TAG does not condone the illegal copying or pirating of software, we do feel that legitimate users should be able to exercise the right to back up Otheir software. There are many products on the market that simply don't do the job, and many users get ripped off from false claims and advertisements.

On the 8-bit side, Al Jennings will demo the Happy Backup system (a hardware mod to 810's and 1050's) and a program called Chipmunk (a software program that backs up software on ANY drive). The 1050 Happy has other benefits such as: true double density support, increased speed (?X!!), and support for most ram disks.

For the ST's, LeRoy Valley will demo Procopy (the all new version 1.40) and ST Copy 2.0. Both of these packages are software only and seem to handle almost every copy protection

scheme currently in use. So come on out to the July meeting and find out how to protect your valuable software!

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings 1050 Happy drive Char Davis Atari 800 Marty Schmidt Monitor

ST Equipment Volunteers:

LeRoy Valley Monitor Dan Barrowman 520 ST Paul Bork Disk Drive

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're scheduled to bring equipment and you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL ME!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

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Viewpoint

IS THE ATARI 8-BIT DEAD?
by Tom Siemietkowski
(B.C.A.U.G.)

Everything we read today in magazines, periodicals and newsletters is Atari 8-bit, as a computer, is DEAD.

How dead it is, is up to the individual computer owner. I have owned mine for about 5 years and have dabbled in basic programming, word processing, spreadsheeting, graphics and some gaming. I have been a very active member in my users group for about that long a time. I have seen members come and go, some for a long spell and many for a meeting or two and disappear. Actually I am quite comfused about what people want from this phenomenon called the computer.

For the money, this is by far the all around best computer (not game machine) on the market. About 10 years ago when this computer came out, there were many on the market that have all but disappeared and yet the Atari survives. Let me change that word survives. I mean flourishes, if we look at it in the correct perspective. Of all you Atari owners out there, how many of you are very proficient at all its capabilities? I would venture to say--very, very few. What do want out of your Atari computer? Is it dead or dying because it cannot do what you want it to do; is it dead or dying because the new expensive 16-bit machines are faster with better graphics; or is it dead or dying because you have heard there will be no new software on the market?

This 8-bit machine will do anything the average computer owner will ask of it; join a user group and ask them if they have some software and you will find out there is enough to keep just about anyone out there busy for many years to come. Even if there was never one more piece of software written, there would be more than enough around for all of us for many years. By adding a printer to an existing computer and disk drive, a whole new world will open to you with just a handful of public domain programs. That would be an output of about $250.

As I said before, I am confused. "What do you want that this computer can't give you, without spending all that extra money for a big new one?" There is nothing wrong with up-grading or starting with a bigger system. The idea of death for the 8-bit will not be.

Dead is dead only if you let it die; there is a lot out there. Just look and ask what you want to do.

Atari News

ATARI at the SUMMER CES
By Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)
with Mike Simpson and Mike Lechlun (MAGIC)
and John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)

(Most of this article is JERRY'S. All the references to "I" refer to him. This article is condensed from 3 separately prepared articles.)

Under the motto "FLYING HIGH", ATARI had the ONLY first-line comuter manufacturer's booths at the sprawling CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW.

Chicago' McCORMICK NORTH, McCORMICK CENTER HOTEL, McCORMICK NORTH, and AMERICANA CONGRESS HOTEL were all filled with electric dreams May 31-June 2. Telephones and VCR's took the most floorspace, and just about anything else you can think of filled in the remainder.

The CES is where manufacturers and major distributers of anything electronic ("for the home") woo retailers and show new products. This year, COMPUTERS WERE OUT. Other than ATARI, only a few CLONEs were represented, notabley the ARMSTRAAD and BLUE CHIP. Printers were even MORE out. You could BOWL in the several printer-manufacturer's booths. The CES is for FUN stuff, and this year, computers are appearantly NO FUN.

EXCEPT for ATARI. The MEGA series STs were NOT shown, nor the LASER PRINTER, becuase they were too "upscale" for the CES, but two ATARI PC-CLONEs on display (perhaps to prove that they do indeed exist!) showed how to be BLUE COMPATIBLE and still not stuffy. But overall, the ATARI display was all about FUN.

Was it worth it? Driving on the Chicago Interstate system to get there? You know, it's such an exciting ride, they make you pay admission (they call it a toll). It's just like riding the bumper cars at Cedar Point! It's just as scary too"

Yes, it's worth it. It's like a circus there. Everywhere you look there are new toys to play with. Just look at the Atari booth! A two-story booth with a real Cesna Skyhawk airplane parked on top of it. There is even a cockpit in the lower section! They are putting visitors in this cockpit and running the Flight Simulator II (on an ST) and letting excited would-be pilots fly it! And just a few booths over, Microprose was showing their new Gunship program (on an IBM) with a real Link Flight Training Simulator! What some folks will do to get attention!

As usual, ATARI had space for third party software developers, although less than last year. Tom Harker of ICD had a central spot, showing the impressive line of 8-bit products like the MIO and P:P: CONNECTION. SHELBOURNE SOFTWARE was showing their prototype 3-D ST BREAKOUT, using the STEREOTEK 3-D glases. This was my first opportunity to use the glasses, and although the flicker was distracitng, the effect was everything you could hope for. HYBRID ARTS had a major MIDI-MUSIC demo going on a stage of their own, and included a furry robot that appeared to play the keyboards and sing as the music ran.

The exibit was one of the most densely populated in the show, although it might have been caused more by people STAYING to enjoy the display than by TRAFFIC. Either way, ATARI made a very good impression on the entertainment-minded CES crowd.

People representing Atari at their booth were again members of the Chicago user groups, third party software reps, and occasionally someone from Atari themselves. It was hard to tell who you were talking to because all wore name badges stating they were from Atari. Some pretty wild responses were heard by these reporters from some of the people (although not as wild as some of the comments from Neil Harris...more on that later).

First, a few more shots at Atari and their new 1200 baud modem (yes, again!). I had a heated argument with one of Atari's development folks that went something like this:

ME: Why did you guys decide to use a handler that was not compatable with the 850-type handler, which is just about the standard for Atari's 8-bit computers?

Atari: Any program written for the 850 will work with our modem.

ME: HUH? That's not what Neil said before.

Atari: Well, all you have to do is append the handler we include with the communication kit with your program and it will work just fine.

ME: That's just the point! What if I wanted to use a M/L or commercial program with it? The 850 handler is already built in, and there is no way to use these programs without a lot of hassle.

Atari: Then those companies will have to modify the program to work.

ME: But it would have been easier to just design your modem to use an 850-type handler!

Atari: The kit will come already packaged with an excellent terminal program, so there is no need to use other term programs. Keith Ledbetter has re-written EXPRESS to work.

ME: But what if I wanted to use BBS EXPRESS, BBCS, or some other BBS program? What about other public domain programs?

Atari: It's not our fault if they don't want to release the source code so people can modify the programs.

ME: Stick to the point...Why not just use....

Atari: But we don't need to! Any program that works with the 850 will work with the new modem by simply using our handler.

ME: AAARRRGGGGHHH!

At this point I decided to go over to the Adult Video section and cool off (which is the WRONG place to go if you want to cool off!).

Later on, I had a discussion with a very well informed source about the modem. It seems that the modem is only 50% Hayes compatable when used directly with the Atari (using their cables and handler). It seems it does not support the DTR pin, and has many other flaws. So, if you have been waiting for this modem with the hopes of saving money by not buying an interface, think again! You will have to do without many of the Hayes features, and forget using it for a BBS!

If you've noticed our negative slant so far, we must apologise. But after talking to other Atari users coming from the booth we couldn't help but notice that a lot of our feelings were shared with other fellow Atarians. There were some good things to come out of the booth. On top of the bi-leveled booth rested a Commanche aircraft, wing span and all. You had to get a boarding pass from one of the lovely Atari flight attendants (another nice thing about the booth). But that's not what you were going up there for. You were there to see...

... the brand new Atari XE Game System (XEGS). A sleekly styled grey unit with round pastel buttons for reset, option, select, and start. The once optional-now standard keyboard is physically separate from the game unit. This is the lap top keyboard many of us have been waiting for! The help key is on the keyboard, separated from the other function keys. The XEGS is essentially a redesigned 65 XE computer. The XEGS will run all standard peripherals, but has no parallel bus. As Mike L. went up to see the unit, there was a hub-bub of activity below. Was this because a member of MAGIC was here to see it? Nope, just VP Michael Katz escorting the Toys R Us delegation up for a first class demonstration and some major league arm twisting...we saw a good show and the TRU people left the "hanger" smiling.

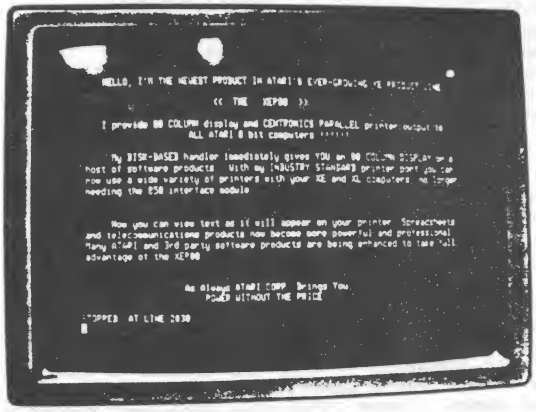
With the XEGS comes Flight Simulator, Bug Attack (packaged with light pistol), and Midnight Magic pinball, each in cartridge form. Flight Simulator is on Atari's new 128K super bank select cartridge. A 256K cart is also in the works. These carts and accesories will be available to computer owners about 6 months

after the release of the XEGS. Atari has acquired the rights to many software titles which will also be released on cartridge format (Choplifter, Archon, Ball Blazer to name a few).

ATARI expects to spend MILLIONS of dollars this fall in advertising the XE SYSTEM (even in comic books), as well as a major TV push for the ST. The commercials were running full time on a few of the DOZENS of monitors recessed in the booth walls. The ST ads attack the MACINTOSH directly and are also aggressive in PC comparisions. The XE ads dwell on the huge existing base of software for the ATARI, and HINT that under the cover you might even find a usable computer.

On to other stuff, Atari was showing a new monitor (for the 8-bit's) called the XE1411. It is a color monitor, and is similar to the ST monitors. However, there is no plans to put this monitor into production. It seems their R&D department wanted to bring it to the show to see what the response was. I think it would be a swell idea for dedicated 8-bitters to spiffy up their systems. If you have a 130XE, you have a miss-match setup already (grey 130XE computer, black and white disk drive, some other color monitor). With the new Atari disk drives, the new monitor will make your desk look much more professional.

The new 80-column card was also shown, however there is still problems with the Atari-Writer 80 program. This program is still not complete, and will probably not be ready when the card shows up in stores. Also, the Silent Partner-80 program is still in the testing stage, and also will not be ready. Although this card is your only current way to get 80-column support on your 8-bit, I'm still not impressed with it.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As always ATARI CORP. brings You, POWER WITHOUT THE PRICE
STOPPED AT LINE 2030

What really worries me about Atari's push of the game machine is the incredable showing that Nintendo received at the show. Not only did Nintendo have the biggest booth at McCormic North, there were several companies showing new games that support their system. There is also a new magazine available dedicated to the Nintendo machine, and if that's not enough, Sharp was showing a television set with a built-in Nintendo game machine! Is Atari really trying to compete against these guys for the computer game market?

Atari also pulled a surprise by showing a new disk drive. Called the XF551, this drive will support single/dual double density for a maximum storage of 360k. It will come with a new dos called A-DOS, being written by Bill Wilkenson. But there was a rumor that this drive was having some trouble working with protected disks. The price for this drive is supposed to run about the same as the 850 drives.

Atari was also showing their 2600 game machine, with several new games. These include Desert Falcon, Boxing, Crossbow, Solaris, Qbert, and Cracked.

New for the 7800 machine is One-on-One, Hat Trick, Summer Games, Gato, Team Wrestling, Karateka, and Choplifter.

Zenith announced that their Midi-Maze game is finally complete and will be released in a couple of weeks for $79.95. Depending on the response (and if it's not pirated to death) they will release an update to include modem support!

Epyx was showing several new games, but none were for the Atari. Maybe it's time for another letter writing campaign, eh? Included in their new releases are California Games, with surfing, skateboarding, and other "in-crowd" games, and Street Sports Basketball.

That's about all, since most of the other new products are reviewed elsewhere in the newsletter. My overall view of the show is bad news for the 8-bit users. I saw very few new software offerings, and no hardware at all, other than the new disk drive and the "old" new Atari products.

As for the ST, things are certainly much brighter. The MIDI music field is exploding with new products, and it seems every new show I attend has something new in software. The announcement of a 4-meg, no-soldering upgrade is certainly welcome news to us 10-thumb'ed hackers. And there was talk of more CAD programs coming soon too. Just listening to what can be done with these programs are exciting!

An unexpected ATARI exibit was some distance from the rest... HARTECH LTD. was displaying their line of ATARI CALCULATORS! Headed by former ATARI Vice President of Sales [illegible] HARRIS, HARTECH has licensed the NAME from ATARI, but has NO other affiliation. This might be a trend- we might see MORE unrelated products with the ATARI name and FUJI logo.

Many ATARI ST machines were seen in other exibits, notably the COMPUTER SOFTWARE SERVICE booths, SOFT-KAT, and others. Overall, the ST seemed to be represented about evenly with IBM-ish machines and slightly more than the AMIGA machines in third-party booths. Conversation with the developers showed no clear preference between the AMIGA and ST, only that both are really heating up in the commercial software marketplace. Expect MUCH more for BOTH machines to be coming. ATARI clearly is staying in the FUN marketplace... while separately attacking the SERIOUS market, more often represented at the COMDEX shows rather than the CES shows. Reports from the COMDEX (running almost concurrently with CES in a terrible timing blunder) said that the MEGA STs and LASER PRINTERS should see plenty of sales action in the coming months, and the

successful IBM EMULATION package from AVANT GUARDE should make more inroads in the office/business markets.

During the show the emulator question came up again. As we left the booth after the second night of the show, we noticed a crowd gathering around MichTron's cubicle in Atari's booth. Was a new game being shown? A new database? Nope, just Leonard Tramiel and Neil Harris, Marketing Director of Atari, playing around with the Commodore C-64 emulator. Their comments (VERBATIM) go as follows:

NH: "...is that the same dork that wrote the one for the 800?"

LT: "No, a different one...this one's from England."

NH: "...he's ripping us off..."

LT: "If he tries to release this, he's in for big trouble..."

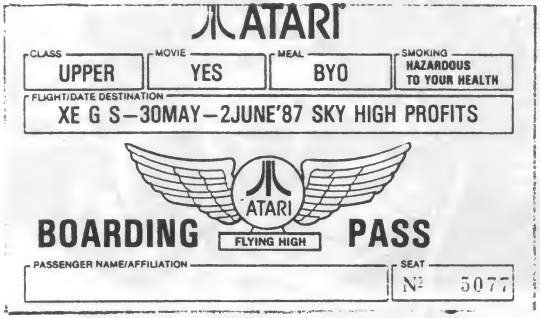
Sounds like fond Commodore sentiments still exist in their hearts, eh?

On Monday night, the local Atari club, CLAUG, held a special CES meeting for their club members and out-of-town Atarians. In attendance were many of the top Atari folks, and executives from companies supporting Atari like Hybrid arts, Antic, and Zanth. Neil Harris spoke to the group, and had these comments on the Atari 800 emulator:

NH: (laughter) "...Darek Mihocka (author of this emulator) has been a real pain in the [illegible] pause, followed by more laughter). We tried to talk to that little twirp, but..."

Given the opportunity to open the ST to another two whole worlds of existing software, this is the attitude that Atari chooses to take. Surprisingly, Atari has given its reluctant

blessing to release of the 800 emulator with OS and Rev. C basic modules intact, providing the source code is also released. A bidding war was rumored to have been won by ANALOG.



Industry Report

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ANTIC'S JUNE '87 ATARI CES REPORT
BY NAT FRIEDLAND, ANTIC EDITOR

"Okay, all those letters this month from Antic readers have convinced us there's still an 8-bit Atari market out there," said Springboard Software president John Paulson at his company's CES booth. "You'll be glad to know that Springboard has now started work on an 8-bit Atari version of Newsroom.

Newsroom is a popular entry-level page layout program for easy newsletters. Springboard is already showing an ST version of their Certificate Maker here, this product is currently shipping.

Good news for Atari graphics users who have been trying to find a touch tablet. Suncom's Animation Station for XL/ XE is now available. The included software provides many pre-drawn pictures as well as automatic shape generation. The tablet can be used in place of joysticks or paddles to control any standard Atari software, according to Suncom.

Strategic Simulations Inc. had extra reason for celebrating at their suite, high above the Chicago River. Last week they signed a contract with TSR to start the first computer versions of the original Dungeons and Dragons games. You should be able to play D&D on your Atari by Christmas.

Datasoft, now being released through Electronic Arts, has two welcome 8-bit titles due out before July. Video Title Shop ($29.95) lets you create colorful animated sequences with graphics and moving text -- which can be transferred to your videorecorder tape via standard electronics cables. Video Title Shop includes the Micro- Painter Plus paint program and a library of built-in borders and screen images. Scrolling, position-changes, fadeouts and a whole range of video special effects are supported. A second disk of video "clip art" for the program will also be released this year.

Also from Datasoft at $29.95 is the second installment of Alternate Reality -- The Dungeon -- which seems to play much faster and more conveniently, with less disk swapping than the earlier installment of this large-scale graphics adventure game.

Most of the unreleased software on display at CES was promised for shipment by early summer. One of the few new packages I was actually able to bring back for review is...Virtuoso. This is the long-evolving music/graphics storyboard system that Antic previewed almost two years ago. The XL/XE version is $49.95 and the ST version is reportedly well along in development.

ST NEW PRODUCT ROUNDUP

What looked like a very powerful and easy-handling 2-D drafting and drawing program was being demonstrated by Xetec of Salina, Kansas (makers of the Grafix AT which has been reviewed in Antic). SCAD gives you pages for 16 ST drawings in RAM. All commands can be operated from GEM or from the keyboard. The $99.95 program is due in September and will not be copy-protected. Page sizes can be defined as large as 32 X 32 inches and many powerful graphics editing tools are built-in. SCAD can convert images into DEGAS format. We'll also be reviewing Xetec's new Printer Enhancer, a $249.95 buffer/switcher with 8 built-in type fonts.

Passport Designs, a leading MIDI software house, is rushing to convert its first ST product -- Master Tracks Pro, a high-powered, user-friendly 64-track sequencer that has been winning rave reviews on the Macintosh this spring. The Passport CES team told Antic that three out of four visitors to their booth wanted this product on the ST instead of the Mac.

Another specialized new use for the ST is to run a graphics database for serious chessplayers. SciSys of London is showing two versions of ST ChessBase -- the software that current World Champion Garry Kasparov has been using to prepare himself four tournaments.

With Chessbase Sr., every recent tournament

game of an upcoming opponent can be fed into the database and instantly examined from a vast variety of viewpoints to pinpoint potential weak points of play. You can see how an oppenent reacts to any standard style of opening or strategy. ChessBase Jr. works with the expensive Leonardo world-class chess computer and the ST. U.S. distribution for all these products was being finalized at CES.

An add-on to PrintMaster Plus, the Print Shop workalike from Unison World, will be a Fonts and Borders disk. Price is not yet set.

GAME GALLERY

Mindscape, which hosted a Sunday rock oldies concert for 1,000 (Bo Diddley, Sam & Dave) showed two $29.95 ST color games designed in England. Q-Ball is a 3-D billiards game played inside a cube where you can adjust the gravity and line up your shots off any wall. Plutos is a shootout where your rocket flies over the scrolling surface of the huge enemy mothership and attempts to destroy it.

From England's Psygnosis, creators of the visually awesome graphic adventure game Brataccas, comes another lushly-detailed extravaganza. Barbarian moves a Conan-type hero through an a vast, scrolling underground kingdom -- color only -- where monsters and hordes of enemy guards must be overcome on every screen.

Electronic Arts is starting to crank out some ST titles too. An enhanced version of Music Construction Set -- with MIDI -- is due in July for $39.95. Other new features are direct waveform editing and a jukebox playback mode.

EA has also taken over distribution of the First Byte talking ST software. First releases are MathTalk, a flashy arithmetic drill for youngsters, and a talking computer version of Mad Libs, the poplular series of humor books where you add inappropriate words to prepared storylines.

Still more from Electronic Arts, a kind of super- Diplomacy strategy game called Empire, where you conquer weaker parts of the world and force them to build weapons and raise new armies for your war machine. But your enemies are just as ruthless, and you can also start the game by re- drawing the map of the world to suit your own tastes.

Logical Design Works has a whole line of fast-moving ST gambling simulations for $34.95 each. Vegas Gambler combines blackjack, roulette, slot machine and poker machine. Other titles available are Vegas Craps and Club Backgammon.

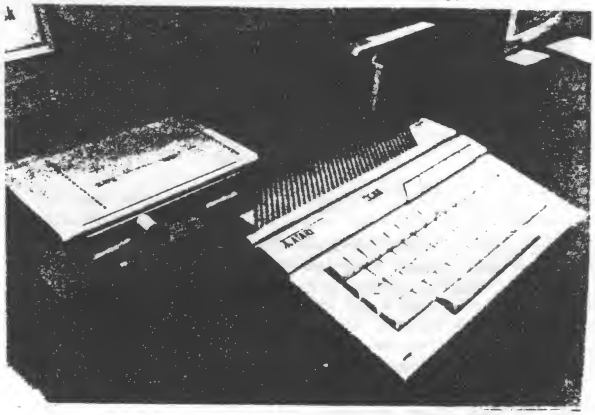
From Canada Jagware is making its ST debut with Alien Fires, a color-only 3-D space maze arriving this summer.

AVATEX 2400 BAUD MODEM

Avatex, well-known for its low-priced Hayes-compatible modems, now has a speedy 2400 baud unit. List price is $319 but previous Avatex modems have been dramatically discounted.

Hardware

DETAILS ON THE XF551
by John Nagy (C.H.A.O.S.)
(All photos also by John Nagy)



The new XF551 DISK DRIVE is a sleek new gray box about 1/2 the size of the 1050 it will replace, and is actually styled more to match the PC-CLONE than the XE. That's not surprizing, as the same drive unit is used in the clone. It will be almost 360K, using a true double sided double density disk format, plus a modified system that will almost triple the read/write speed. It will be shipped with "ADOS", a new disk operating system from OSS INC, the people that brought you DOSXL, BASIC XE, ACTION, etc. ADOS will be able to read DOS 2 and the alien "density-and-a-half" of DOS 2.5 as well as its own disks, but will not be backwards-compatible. ADOS should be usable in older ATARI compatible drives, and may be marketed separately as well. Features include subdirectories and optional menus. It sounds a lot like SPARTADOS from ICD CORP.

Although it is scheduled for summer release, NEIL HARRIS and other ATARI officials admitted that the XF551 was having some trouble being

fully compatible with some disk protection schemes in common useage, and might be delayed some time to work it and other points out. The new drive eliminates both the 1050 and any plans for a 3.5" 8-bit disk drive, heavily rumored for the last nine months.

Already, the new drive has triggered speculation of interchangability with the ST. Since the XF551 is basically a PC external drive already, hopes are being voiced that the ATARI PC and the ST will have interchangable drives, allowing access to 5.25" disks (as in PC EMULATION) for the ST, and to 3.25" ST drives for the PC. NEIL HARRIS, head of ATARI product information, confirmed that the interfaces were to be identical, and "mix and match" would be very possible, depending perhaps on your DOS. HOPEHOPEHOPE.

Programming

THE FORTH STAGE-
A LEARNING GUIDE
by Ed Crisler (A.L.E.)
(part 3)

Once upon a time (around the late 60's) there was a man named Charles H. Moore that was fed up with the existing programming languages of the time. I bet you can't guess what language he created.

I have always found the history of FORTH to be very interesting, so I thought I'd cover part of it this time around.

FORTH is unique in that it is the only language not produced by a development team, but rather by a single man, Charles Moore. The first actual use of FORTH was in 1971 when Moore wrote a program for a radio telescope. In 1973, due to the growing demand for his language, Moore create FORTH Inc. The language is unique in yet another fashion, it is the only language that is written in itself. Oh yes, earlier versions are written in other languages but the newer versions of FORTH are written in FORTH.

Let's start this session of with something of great importance, the screen editor. If you have already read the doc section on the editors use, you have probably found it no help at all. Let's start from scratch- why do you want the editor? It allows you to save screens of definitions that you only need at specific times. To use it is easy.
1) Find an empty screen on your disk.

2) Put the screen into the editor using the UE command. (eg. 10 UE)

3) Clear the screen by using the WIPE command.

You now have an empty screen to save your definitions on, so, "NOW WHAT?" you asK. And a very good question to, if I might add. Use the arrow keys to move the cursor up onto the screen. You will notice a command put on the screen ;S. This tells FORTH that the screen is finished and to stop compiling. Move this to the last line of the screen. This way anything you save here can be added to your language by loading the screen number (eg. 10 load). Once you have finished with your definitions, move the cursor down to the DOIT statement and press return, this puts you back in command mode. To save the finished screen type FLUSH , to end without saving type FORTH. The other commands given in the docs are very easy to understand.

Did anyone figure out the reason for the first DUP in my example last time? I'll give you a while longer to ponder it.

What I will explain today is the ' ." ' command. This command is very similar to BASIC's print statement. Be sure to put a space after the command before you enter what you want to print. When your message is finished you close the command with a " you do not need a space before this command.

You may have noticed that all the print was put together on the same line, similar to the semi-colon used by a BASIC print. FORTH assumes you want the print to continue on the same line to make it move on you use the CR command.(eg. ." this is a test" CR) Any time that a CR command is encountered FORTH does a carriage return.

Perhaps it's time for a brief explanation of FORTH's logic. As you must have noticed in the first examples (DIR etc...) I called words that I had just defined. The reason is that in FORTH you design the program by writing many small modules and calling them, rather than one big program. This makes it much easier to make an error free program as you can test each of the small module as they are finished.

```
: SQUARE DUP * . ;
```

Let's say we have already defined the above word. We now want to create a word that will return the cube of a number. A programmer in any other language might do it as:

```
: CUBE DUP DUP * * ;
```

Which would work but would be considered unstructured code and will be a little slower than:

```
: CUBE DUP SQUARE * ;
```

This is how a good FORTH programmer would solve the same problem. Always break the program into as small of parts as possible. This is not only easier to debug but it actually uses memory more efficiently. The whole key to programming in FORTH is to think in terms of human logic rather than machine logic.

As you define each word of a program you are slowly building a pyramid, that at it's top will be the one word that executes the whole thing.

Well, I'm about out of space so I'll leave you with an example program and let you try to figure it out on your own. I'll offer a full explanation next time, until then, keep the FORTH!

```
: SQRE DUP * . ;
: PRINT DUP . ." SQR IS " ;
: DATA 10 0 DO I PRINT SQRE CR LOOP ;
```

(Run the program by typing DATA.)

Review

ST NOTES by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

The age of 2400 baud modems is upon us, and there are deals to be had everywhere! With more and more BBS's supporting 2400 baud, the cost of one of these lightning fast modems can quickly be repaid from lower phone bills. Since 2400 baud is now working very reliably, I expect to see Genie, Compuserve, and Delphi offering 2400 baud service at a local phone number in the near future.

What does one of these babies cost, you might ask? Take a guess. $600? No, too high. $500? Lower, lower! $400? Well, rather than keep you guessing, I'm going to blurt out the answer...$199.99!! Yes, for $200, you can own a full featured 300/1200/2400 baud modem. And you can choose from three different modems! Browsing through the latest issue of Computer Shopper, I located three companies that are selling 300/1200/2400 baud external modems for $200. All three claim compatibility with the Hayes AT command set. The three companies (and their modems) are:

CEI 800-USA-DISK Supermodem 24 5 year warranty

Advanced Comp. Tech. 800-654-6464 Expert 24e 2 year warranty

USA Flex 800-USA-FLEX desktalk II 5 year warranty-I ended up selecting the desktalk II from USA Flex, because I have dealt with them before and have been very pleased with their service. Also, the desktalk II is fully compatible with the Hayes AT command set...at ALL speeds (there are some specific commands for 2400 baud). While the other two may also be compatible at all speeds, USA Flex was the only one to mention it in their ad.

When I received the modem, something rattled inside and I thought that it might be broke. Upon further inspection I discovered that it was the lithium battery bouncing around inside. Pulling the modem apart, I quickly fixed this problem. However, I did run into a problem here. The manual does not mention a battery anywhere, and also doesn't tell you how to pull the modem apart! There aren't any screws, and no fastening tabs! It turns out that the modem is held together by friction on four plastic posts. I admit that the case looks cheap, and the construction is not the best...but it works great and has a 5 year warranty. In fact I had less problems downloading with this modem than I had with a U.S. Robotics 2400 Courier (list $595!).

It was while disassembling the unit that I found some info that made me real glad that I picked this modem. It is manufactured by Incomm Data Systems who, by the way, also makes the Incomm Turbo 2400 -- a very popular $400 modem that is upgradeable to 4800 and 9600 baud (by a simple chip change) and offers MNP error correction as an option (MNP error correction is used by a large number of mainframes). Placing a quick call to USA Flex, I found out that this is simply the generic model of the Turbo 2400. At half the price it sports all of the features -- it's upgradeable and you can get MNP error correction if so desired!

The desktalk II offers all of the goodies...Auto answer, auto dial, help screen, and 11 led's to tell you what's going on! You've got led's for High Speed, Auto Answer, Ring Indicate, OH, Carrier Detect, Transmit Data, Receive Data, Request To Send, Clear To Send, Data Terminal Ready, and Data Set Ready. The back of the modem has two phone jacks for line and phone, and also has four dip switches. The dip switches allow you to set DTR and/or CD/CTS/DSR permanently on, and also allow you to set the modem for auto answer on the second ring. (All of these parameters are also software settable)

There is an internal speaker to allow you to monitor the phone line while the connection is being made, and the volume is software adjustable. (Although I couldn't set it as low as I would like to -- I don't want it off, but 0 is still a little too loud.) Nearly every

parameter, once set, can be saved in the non-volatile memory. (That's where the lithium battery comes in.)

It's capable of asynchronous AND synchronous communications, and supports both tone and pulse dialing! There's also a whole bunch of built in diagnostics that the user can run.

As an added bonus (It didn't excite me too much) you get a free communications package...for an IBM. TransMIT is actually a very nice looking piece of software, so maybe you could sell it to some IBM user and make a little money. It comes in a nice velour binder and looks very professional.

All in all, I would have to recommend the desktalk II to anyone looking for a new modem. At this price, I simply couldn't recommend a 1200 baud to anyone! Remember - It's got a 5 YEAR WARRANTY!

Oh, I forget to mention one other fact. When you buy it, USA Flex will refund your money to you in thirty days if you're not satisfied for any reason! How can you go wrong? Well see you next month, I've got to go burn some phone lines!!

Industry Report

Tom and Gerry Visit ICD
by Jerry Cross and Mike Lechkun

Oh well, Mike's lousy mouse joke at least got us in the door and to the receptionist. We entered an old textile factory on a bumpy road on the south side of Rockford, Illinois. The building's reduced demands allowed it to house small, emerging buisnesses. This is where ICD resides.

After the aforementioned bout with the receptionist, we were greeted by Marilyn, one of the executive secretaries, and were shown the main office. This office house other secretaries, accounting and art departments, and programmers. Sitting on a dresser in the middle of the room was a 520 ST, Courier 2400 modem, disk and hard drives--in short, the ICD BBS. That's where the fun started!

We were introduced to staff programmer Keith Ledbetter. Keith, of Express! fame, showed us his first products for his new employer. ICD Express! (we think that was the title) is an ST BBS program that will knock your socks off and send them across the room! It's really that good! The program is a mixture of features found on 850 BBS Express! and some of the major on-line services. Written in a language composed by Keith (also to be released as soon as it is documented), ICD Express is a callers dream, yet not a Sysop's nightmare. In the download section, a user can scan the list of available files, or view each filename followed by a brief description. Arc'ed files can be un-arc'ed on-line to view the separate files contained in the master file. The sysop may set a variety of flags restricting/allowing different privledges to individual users. Standard X-modem, CRC X-modem, and Y-modem are the protocols supported. "Kermit's batching allows some users to type in "*.*" and download everything, and I'm not too keen on that," said Keith. 32 message bases can be created, with a maximum of 250 messages each containing 4000 bytes of information. This will cost you over a meg of memory, but that's the breaks--get a Mega ST when they come out! Thread following, tagged messages, and a new on-line text editor makes this message area complete.

I thought the suggested retail of $79.95 was reasonable, Jerry thought it a bit pricey. For ICD's first foray into the ST field, this seems an excellent product in the tradition that ICD has established.

After Mike got up off his knees in worship to Mr. Ledbetter, the tour moved on. Up an escalator and through a vacant machinery room we went. Marilyn left us in the capable hands of Brad, head of shipping/handling and production. Stacks of untested, incompleted MIO devices were about the room. Each MIO is tested from 9 to 24 hours for reliability before packaging and shipping. This commitment to quality along with ICD's excellent consumer support has forced them to expand three times within the warehouse. Surely a fourth expansion is eminant. When Jerry complained of a lack of quality service on non-ICD equipment in his area, Brad rather matter-of-factly said "send it in to us - Tom (Harker, ICD's President) will look at it." ICD routinely assists with all installation of their products at reasonable fees. ICD installs Rambo's (memory upgrades), and US Doublers (1050 drive enhancements) for $30 and $15...they'll look at user's equipment as well when their own product checks OK.

After being frisked for any free sample MIO's (just kidding), our tour had ended. In spite of the grubby factory style surroundings, ICD is a company committed to dependability to all Atari owners. This is one book you can't judge by the cover!

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Review ST

REVIEW OF REGENT BASE
by Serge Vaillancourt
Excerpted from Faster Disk Magazine

REGENT BASE just became the fourth database that I have used (or tried) on the ST. The first was the obvious DB MASTER ONE, given to me with the purchase of my 520 ST. Even though it used the GEM features, it quickly found its way into my "archives". Not that it was unusable, but mainly because it didn't match my needs. The second was H & D BASE. This one is close enough to a professional database and what's more, it is very similar to DBASE II that is so well known in IBM circles. Not bad, but the first versions were buggy. DB MAN is the third, a DBASE III clone. "Now, here's something interesting" I said to myself as I adopted it.

The first things I look for in a database are:

- Ability to work with many databases simultaneously;
- Inter-relation capacity between databases;
- Ability to create procedures;
- Printed output format editing and designing;
- Possibility of saving variables.

DB MAN satisfies all these requirements. REGENT BASE is not as flexible but nevertheless includes a good portion of these features. AND it's much easier to use.

On the plus side, REGENT BASE runs under the GEM environment and even the user created databases can make use of GEM (mouse button). REGENT BASE then allows for a better screen layout and a much improved working space for the end-user.

Another plus for REGENT BASE: it has its own integrated text editor. With DB MAN, we have to use a separate editor. To run a program or procedure, one must load DB MAN in memory and then run that program or procedure. If there was an error, you have to load the editor, make your corrections, re-load DB MAN, re-run, etc... With REGENT BASE, after you've written the program or procedure, you can call the processor and run the program immediately. In the case of an error, REGENT BASE brings you back to the editor with the cursor resting on the mistake.

REGENT BASE is sold with a 167 pages manual in a 9" X 8" binder, which is very convenient with an inside pocket where you find the REGENT BASE diskette. The diskette contains the REGENT BASE programs as well as two complete

applications that may be used as tutorials, but since they're so good, they will be very practical for some users.

The manual is split between three chapters and the index.

The first chapter called "GETTING STARTED" gives the information needed for a first run of REGENT BASE. It also contains a mini-manual for each one of the applications included in the package.

The manual is written in a reference book form (except for the first chapter) and those looking for a tutorial in the book will be deceived. People who have never used a database will have to read certain passages a few times and maybe even look for other information sources. But in general, the various items in the manual are clearly identified and you won't need to look around for a day and a half to find a desired passage.

The FORM EDITOR allows you to create or modify the database templates and the commands needed to activate it. The FORM EDITOR is made of two parts; one for creating fields and for the screen presentation, and the second which is nothing more than a text editor used to create the programs and procedures.

The first part is called the GEM OBJECT EDITOR and is used to create the design and the contents of the file. There are drop menus containing the various editing tools such as CUT, PASTE, the file manipulation tools, LOAD, SAVE. A sub-menu for designing the screen output contains the text effects and colors tools. Another sub-menu allows you to move between both parts of the FORM EDITOR.

The fields are edited with the help of the mouse to select the type of field (by clicking), position the field (by dragging) and to select the width of the field (by stretching the field's box).

CONCLUSION

If I compare it with my preferred database program (DB MAN), I can say that REGENT BASE lacks a bit of flexibility, meaning that DB MAN has a much larger language and is therefore capable of more detailed processing. However, I'm attracted by two things in REGENT BASE. It supports GEM in its working tools and also in its applications, and even though its language is less evolved than DB MAN's, it is no less efficient and easy to use.

Consequently, I don't think I would be making a mistake by saying that the casual users have enough power to work with in REGENT BASE for their personal management. It might even be powerful enough for various professional users.

REGENT SOFTWARE
7131 Owensmouth,
suite 45A,
Canoga Park,
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(818) 882-2800

Review Eight

MIO MANIA: A PERSONAL REVIEW
by DOUG FELDMAN (WAUG)

(EDITORS NOTE: Although we ran a complete review of the MIO a few months ago here in MAM, Doug's experiences and observations answer several of the continuing most-asked questions about the "MUTI-INPUT-OUTPUT" device from ICD INC.)

After reading two very favorable reviews in Analog (march 87) and Antic (April 87), and seeing the big full page advertising, I could not resist. I decided to buy the MIO for my Atari 800XL. The first critical decision was which version to buy. The 256K MIO is $199 and the 1 meg MIO is approximately $325. Finally, I took the cheapskate approach. There is a big demand for these little wonders and ICD suggested that a mail order company or a local retailer may be able to supply one quicker, but I received it in little over a week.

My first experience after connecting it to the XL parallel bus and turning on the XL and the MIO was the horrible distortion of my video display. I have been using a 13 inch color TV (Zenith) all these years with respectable picture quality. But with the MIO connected, the picture quality was so distorted that I could hardly read the MIO command menu. For the next several days, my primary concern was trying to remedy this situation. Mike Olin told me that all was well with his MIO and XE using a home TV. ICD said they had primarily tested the MIO using monitors connected to the XL and XE. I did verify that the MIO and XL do send a very clear picture using a video monitor. From among many of the suggestions I collected over the next several days, one idea from Tim Grzechowski seemed to help the most. I have taken all the slack wire in the video output cable and wound it around an empty paper towel holder. This creates a kind of RF interference filter. Furthermore, I discovered that the exact placement of the video cable and the proximity to the telephone cable also play

an important part of the overall picture quality. I have described all this in extensive detail because the problem is very disturbing!!!

After two weeks of exploration, here are some of my discoveries using the MIO in various software applications:

First, the choice of DOS is critical to gain complete access to all the MIO features. Although ICD built it with SpartaDOS in mind, only Sparta version 3.2 will work when the MIO is connected. All other Sparta versions will cause complete loss of drive access after you boot up the system.

Second, Atari DOS 2.5 will not access the MIO Ramdisks. However, DOS 2.5 will allow the print spooler feature. I have quickly tested other DOS's and found that Atari DOS 2.0, SmartDOS 6.1 and MYDOS 4.0 will allow complete access to the MIO Ramdisks.

As far as I can tell, almost all dedicated software packages will at least access the print spooler feature. Thus, Print Shop will not access the extra Ramdisks, but you can allocate a very big print spooler and regain the Print Shop Editor menu about 1/2 of the way into a printout. I have experienced one bug thus far with Print Shop. If I choose an editor option requiring access to the disk drive (D1:) while the print spooler is completing a printout, the program seems to wait until the entire printout is finished before successfully accessing the drive.

I have unhappily discovered that the XM-301 version of BBS Express will not operate if the MIO is connected. I had hoped to use the MIO on the WAUG BBS. I have made several calls to talk to Keith Ledbetter about this (he now works at ICD). At first he thought it was a conflict between Sparta 3.2 and the modem handler. Then he decided there was a conflict between the MIO ROM and the BBS software. Apparently, there are no conflicts in his 850 version of the BBS. So, I guess I had bad luck on this application!

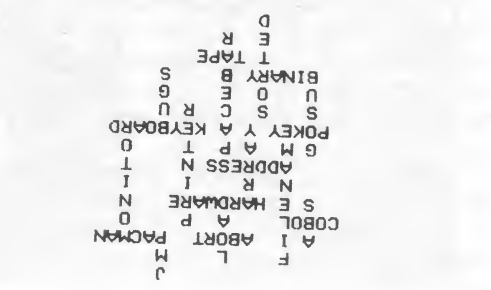
My most successful implementation of the MIO thus far is loading the AtariWriter Dictionary Disk into MIO D2:. Then when using AtariWriter Plus, I can select the Spell Checker module and have the Dictionary Disk online in MIO Ramdisk D2: The spell checking is very fast and must rival the speed of PaperClip XE. This configuration still leaves me a 64K print spooler on my 256K MIO. A small problem seems to be that MIO Ramdisk sectors are always double density. So, if you Scopy a single density disk (720 SD sectors) into a MIO Ramdisk, it will consume 720 DD sectors. This is a net waste of 92K Ram. ICD says that you cannot format the Ramdisk into single density disks.

I also discovered a very useful MIO utility on Compuserve. The MIO.ARC file contains ML routines to save your current MIO configuration to D1: A second utility will read the config file and reset the MIO. These utilities are conveniently executed from within a '.BAT' file (SpartaDOS).

I recently spoke to ICD and was told they are writing new ROMs for a future upgrade of the MIO. There are several reported bugs with the print spooler pointer and some problems have developed after extended periods of use.

As you can see, the marriage of the MIO and my XL has been kind of rocky so far. I would suggest that anyone considering buying the MIO should first borrow one and test out the exact software - hardware applications you have in mind. I will be glad to answer your questions in person and help anyone interested in testing out the versatility of this device.

ANSWERS: MAMPUZ



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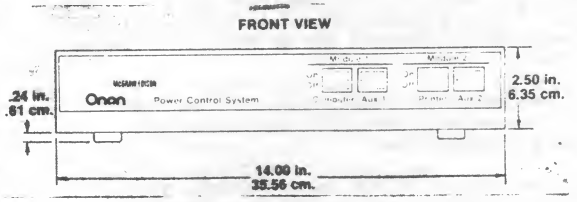

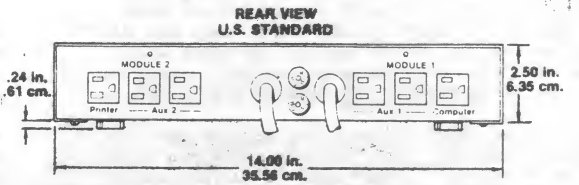

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"MAMPUZ"
by Guy A. Hurt (C.H.A.O.S.)

Here's another game that requires a minimum of hardware... a #2K Pencil (with a good ERASE HEAD- real WRITE-PROTECTION) plus standard volitle memory is all you need.

There are no trick clues, and there MAY be more than one "correct" solution to the puzzle. One solution will be found elsewhere in this magazine. Have fun!

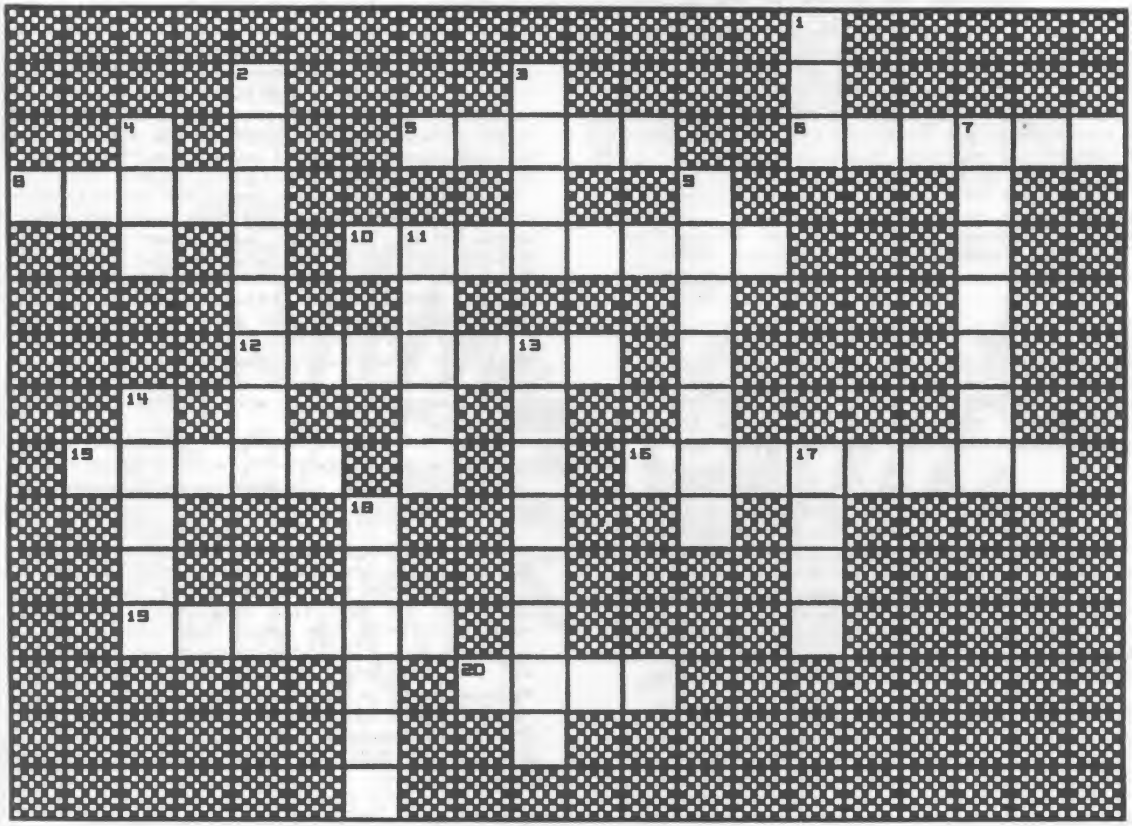
(If you have some ideas for quizes, puzzles, or whatever for "FUNSTUFF", contact your club editor! We want YOUR material!)

ACROSS CLUES

5. ABNORMAL TERMINATION
6. GAME
8. LANGUAGE
10. EQUIPMENT
12. INTERNAL LOCATION
15. ATARI SOUND CHIP
16. INPUT DEVICE
19. NUMBER SYSTEM
20. MEDIA

DOWN CLUES

1. ASSEMBLY STATEMENT
2. LABEL
3. BASIC COMMAND
4. BASIC FUNCTION
7. OUTPUT DEVICE
9. HARDWARE
11. TABLE
13. SEPARATOR
14. BASIC STATEMENT
17. LOGIC ERRORS
18. SEQUENCED



Last Hacks

A FEW MINUTES WITH RANDY MOONEY
by Frank Walters, T.A.C.O. BELL BBS
Excerpted from ZMAGAZINE-ST

Did'ja ever notice---those bulletin boards that go wee-wah.. wee-wah.. wee-wah.. when you connect? That really annoys me. I wish all modems went weeeeeh like mine. Half the time they don't even connect anyway.

Did'ja ever notice---those bulletin boards that don't do anything when you connect? They make you hit RETURN a bunch of times before anything happens. That's a pain in the neck. Nobody answers a telephone that way, they always say "hello?" or something like that. Why don't all bulletin boards say something like "hello" when they connect, and not make you hit a bunch of keys before they say anything? It doesn't seem polite to me.

...Ya know what really bothers me? Did'ja ever see those messages that you try to read and at the end of the message there are about 33 carriage returns and the whole thing scrolls off the screen before you can read it? I think there ought to be some kind of law or something that everybody who writes messages would have to read their own message and if they don't understand it then they would have to delete it.

...Did'ja ever see---those silly twirling cursors on some bulletin boards? Did'ja ever capture for a long time and see how much extra garbage goes into the buffer just from those silly cursors? Even worse, did'ja ever try printing them? Twirling cursors really bug me.

Did'ja ever notice---those cutesy menus that give you no idea what anything is? I mean, why can't all bulletin boards use "G" for Goodbye? I've seen Off, Quit, Land, Terminate, and even Bye. Why does every sysop complain about dropped carrier and then make it so hard to log off? There ought to be a law that certain commands are sacred and can't be touched: Download, Upload, Time, Messages and Goodbye!

Did'ja ever notice---those people who write long messages that are continued on the next message? Did'ja ever notice after reading all those words that you have no idea what they were talking about? I never read any messages that are continued anymore. People who write those messages don't have anything important to say, they just like to see their words on the screen or maybe just like the typing practice.

...Did'ja ever download---a big long file from a long-distance board and the file didn't run? I like to have my friends call the long-distance board and download the long files and then give them to me only if they work. I wish I had more friends. I wish I could be allowed to erase those bad files from the sysop's disk so other people wouldn't have the same problem.

...Doesn't it bother you---that some bulletin boards change the filenames so you don't recognize the download list and you download all the same files as last week but with different names? Maybe the sysop does that 'cause nobody uploads and it makes everybody think he has a lot of different files. I always wondered about that. Maybe somebody uploads them that way so the sysop will think he is getting something new and lets the caller have "blackbeard privileges" or something.

..."Handles" are a pain in the neck. I never could think of a good handle and am embarassed whenever I log-on a new bulletin board and the last question is "What is your REAL NAME?". I never know what to say because I already used my real name. Should I make up a real name different from the one I used at the beginning? One board I logged on asked for my real name first. I thought that would be easy so when it asked for my "Handle" I just answered: NONE. It kept asking: "NONE, what is your command?" Then when I logged off, it said, "Thank you for calling, NONE". I felt real foolish. I don't like bulletin boards that make me feel foolish. I usually don't call back. I never could leave E-mail on those boards because I never could figure out who to send the mail to. Maybe I could find some people more like me by leaving E-mail for "NONE".

...Did'ja ever notice---the sysops that complain the most about callers disconnecting are the ones that have boards that disconnect from YOU? I fill out a long questionaire and then while I am trying to find out where everything is located, I see a message that says "Time expired, disconnecting" and it hangs up. Then the next time I call back I have a nasty note from the sysop that says I let my time run out. That really bugs me. I didn't set the time limit, he did. Why is he mad at me?

That's all the time I have for now. Did'ja ever notice that you never seem to have enough time for/

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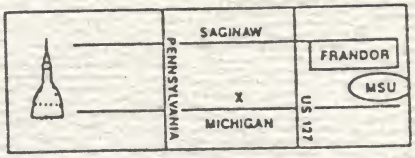

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MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE

A CO-OPERATIVE PUBLICATION OF THESE ATARI CLUBS:
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G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) -- G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

Atari News

... and COMMENT,
Complied by John Nagy

BIGGEST NEWS: The ATARI MAGIC SHOW, August 28-29-30 at the SOUTHFIELD HILTON HOTEL, just outside of Detroit. This is the FIRST 3-day ATARIFEST, and the ONLY midwest appearance of this hobbiest's delight that you have read so much about allover the rest of the country. DON'T MISS THIS ONE. Full details are on PAGE 12 inside this issue of MAM. Come and help cheer for the new ATARI products (if they are there) or jeer the ATARI reps (if they come only with excuses)!

More on those elusive products: Neil Harris, in a copyrighted release through GEnie telecomunication systems, says the MEGA (with BLITTER) and the 1200 baud modem are both in final pre-production test, only days away from full production. He says the MODEM has the ugliest box he has ever seen... but then, most of us don't keep the box as an object d' art. The PC is looking like LATE SUMMER. The XEP-80 (80 column driver for the 8-bit) is AGAIN being delayed by parts availability problems, as is the $1500 laser printer. Schedule on them is now "as soon as possible".

1030 EXPRESS Version 3 has been on CompuServe for several weeks. It is not available on BBS systems yet, because it is still in testing. Keith Ledbetter promises that the final version should be ready VERY SHORTLY, and will support the word-wrap, CRC, type-ahead window, and other great features of the 850 version. Be patient, it will be worth it! The EXPRESS! line of terminals are THE BEST for the 8-bit ATARI, BAR NONE. And they are FREE.

MORE EMULATORS APPEAR. You've been following the flack on Darek Mihocka's ST TRANSFORMER (800 emulator for the ST)? Of course you have. How about another one? STEVE JONES, of Pennsylvania, has shoved his own version of an 8-bit emulator into a CART for the ST! While sound and some graphics modes are not supported yet, STEVE's version is estimated to run at 70% of the 8-bit speed, as opposed to 40-50% as in Darek's more complete TRANSFORMER. Like Darek's, the JONES version has printer and modem support, but even features AXLON-EMULATION to use the extra memory of the ST as RAMDISKS. STEVE runs "JONESWARE", and expects to market his cart like the MAGIC-SAC, where the user must supply his own ROM CHIPS to make the unit work. Price: around $50, ready by this Christmas. No word on ATARI's view of this possible new entry into the emulation market. JONESWARE, BOX 7037, MECHANICSBURG, PA, 17055.

ATARI has made a big noise in the music industry with the MIDI port on the ST. SInce it is the only computer that offers such an item BUILT IN, plus has all that POWER and only that PRICE, the ST has become the #1 computer of choice for musicians. Musicians? Yes, the computer is becoming so integral to modern music making, that MANY music stores now carry COMPUTER SOFTWARE, and YES, ATARI ST computers! ATARI was the first computer manufacturer to go to the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC MERCHANTS show, and was swamped by hopeful vendors. Who needs to dig between toys to buy ATARI computers anymore... just look between the GUITARS and the DRUMS.

ANTIC MAGAZINE is looking for FREELANCE WRITERS for reviews of 8-bit adventure and role-play games. They want to see samples of your writing and evidence that you are an advanced gamer. Contact them at 544 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94107. Meantime, submit your hopeful material HERE, and become a "published" author!

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Rich and Judy Barnes (517) 349-0404

Inside MAM: THE CLUBS- PAGE

C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	7
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	8
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	8
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	8
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	9
G.A.G. (FLINT)	11

FEATURES:

ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT	COVER
PUBLISHER'S NOTES	3
ATARI MAGIC SHOW PREVIEW	12
ANTIC SANTA CLARA ATARIFEST REPORT	12
GFA BASIC - REVIEW	13
DAISY-DOT NLQ REVIEW	14
ST NOTES - GREAT PD ST STUFF	15
PM UTILITY FOR THE ST - REVIEW	16
ST DIRECTORY STRUCTURE - TECH	18
COMPUTER SECURITY ACT UPDATE	20
FUNSTUFF- MAMPUZ!	21
"C" LANGUAGE IN EASY LESSONS	22
KEYBOARD REDEFINER FOR 8-BIT	24
LAST HACKS - ELECTRIC BABYSITTER	26

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request.

Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

Another month, late, but catching up nicely! Our objective is to be on schedule in order to have fresh copies of the SEPTEMBER issue of MAM at the MAGIC ATARIFEST in Southfield at the end of August. I expect to spend a good part of the weekend both at the show in general and at the C.H.A.O.S. table, where I will also have a big display of MAM back issues (available for pennies on the dollar!). I also hope to organize a seminar for the newsletter folks of C.A.C.E. (Jackson), W.A.U.G. (Ann Arbor), M.A.C.E. (Detroit), as well as MAGIC, to discuss more ways to co-operate in production of top quality newsletters for our clubs. Then, expect FULL coverage with PICTURES YOU CAN REALLY SEE in the OCTOBER issue of MAM.

Last month's attempt to bring you CES coverage photos WAS less than a roaring sucess, wasn't it. OK, now we know the lower limit of our print medium, and it has to be up from here. Preparing photos for print costs money, and we tried an alternative that was free... and we got what we paid for. Not again.

"THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING NEWSLETTER" struck again this month, with the summer nearly crushing the clubs and the vendors into the sand... Nobody is writing, nobody is buying, nobody is meeting... no ads, no contributions equals small MAM. Still, this month the feature section begins on page 12, bringing you almost 16 pages of new feature material in addition to the club pages. Not a bad haul, overall, and advertisers and writers alike promise a big push this fall.

SPEAKING OF ADS, as we gain experience with the system of printing this co-operative newsletter, we have found that we are now able to offer the clubs a FULL 50/50 split of the proceeds on all ads sold and maintained by the clubs. The math is easier (it was 60/40 before) and the incentive is higher than ever for all the clubs to get rolling this fall with advertisers. Think BIG, think NATIONAL, and save money for your club while contributing to one of the country's most re-printed and quoted club publications - MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE.

* * *

ZMAGAZINE, a weekly online-newsletter published (for free) by RON KOVACS of NEW JERSEY, has had some rough sailing of late. You read a few moths back of difficulties with CompuServe... well, they weren't entirely resolved, and may never be. He has privately told me that he

seriously wonders if he should bother doing ZMAG at all anymore, considering the personal expense, work, hassles, even hints of lawsuits.

Ron republished an update on expected delivery dates of new ATARI products that ATARI CORP posted through the GEnie telecomputer network. Says Ron: "Due to a copyright notice in the Atari News column, CompuServe could not allow us to post it. We even asked Mr. Neil Harris for the official response about the matter, and we were told that we could not upload the text to CompuServe because the article stated for use by GEnie members, etc. Since ISSUE #50, we have been encountering many problems. From the ST-Transformer articles, to the GEnie Services sign-on information, on to the Analog Copyright notice, and now another with Atari's copyright on their news."

To fill you in, recently Ron reprinted what appeared to be a freely traded article that in fact was offered by ANALOG MAGAZINE (without any copyright info attached) on the DELPHI network. ANALOG was not amused and quickly said so. Ron was caught in the middle, where the best of intentions won't buy coffee.

Ron is also referring to CONSIDERABLE resistance (read: censorship) that he encountered from CompuServe SYSOP MIKE SHOENBACH when Ron helped start the flood of public sentiment about the ST TRANSFORMER (800 emulator for the ST). Mike didn't like MY original article, refused to post it on his own judgement that it "must be false", then accosted Ron for reprinting it in ZMAG, threatening to drop ZMAG if Ron followed up on what ultimately became the User Group Coup of the year.

Chief ATARI SIG man, RON LUKS, tried to patch things up with Ron and ZMAGAZINE, offering to see what kind of special privileges and access areas could be extended to Ron and his contributors. Things looked better for a while, then LUKS sorta dropped out of the picture at COMPUSERVE, leaving MIKE in charge, and the old friction was back. Late postings, complaints about ANY reference to other telecom services, ZMAG BBS oulet lists, etc.

Despite it all, Ron Kovacs has now started ZMAG-ST, a twice-a-month specialty issue in addition to the regular wide-appeal weekly ZMAG. Newsletters all over the country reprint articles from ZMAG, and I for one would hate to be without it. (ZMAG and ZMAG-ST appear on many of the MAM club bulletin boards.)

Let's both give RON a big hand for remarkable effort (all for no personal gain), and encourage him to weather the current storms. We NEED both ZMAG and the dedication to ATARI user support that it voices every week.

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6) Contest is for the ATARI 8-BIT version only. Coming soon : an ST contest. #

7) And a random drawing will occur for all participants involved for some goodies of our choice. Who knows, maybe you will win - but only if you enter.

8) Deadline is Nov. 15, 1987. Please send your screen(s) to the above address in care of: MARS BDCK CONTEST.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
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Presidential Address

Pres Sez
Leo Sell

Where never is heard,
A discouraging word,
La la laaaa, la la la la la la laaaaaa.

Not the theme song of Atari users anymore is it... There is a definite pall over the attitudes of Atari users, 8-bit in particular.

I think this attitude is part of the reason for the decline in user group membership all over the country. People get discouraged, think they have a non-supported, or obsolete product, and drop out or move on. WRONG ANSWER. While the technology is obsolete, what about the utility of the system. Does it still do what you want to do with a computer? Often the answer is yes. Find a better reason than obsolescence to drop it or upgrade.

How about non-support? The last thing you should do is drop out or get less involved when the manufacturer of your system, and the software companies begin to drop support. On

the contrary, the support responsibility is now entirely yours and the best way to meet the responsibility is to be involved in a user group. NO ONE ELSE can help. A user group such as ours has always been the best support you can have. Now it may be the most as well.

Resolve to get more involved with your Atari by redoubling your efforts and involvement in CHAOS. I guarantee you'll be more satisfied than ever before.

Meeting Minutes

EIGHT BIT MEETING-
Reported by GUY HURT

There seems to be an inverse proportional relationship between the temperature and meeting attendance. As typical for this time of year, we had a sparse crowd on hand, but we had our usual full agenda.

Our general discussion covered such topics as the cancellation of the Chicago CES, and the upcoming Magic Computer Show, slated for the last weekend in August, in Southfield.

Lee Kronenberg demoed a hardwired numeric keypad, capable of working with anything, and without a "handler".

In honor of one year of this fine publication, I gave a brief history on CHAOS newsletters.

Bill Johnson gave an extensive demo of our disk of the month, which contained the game 'Star Lords'.

And finally, I gave a presentation on how to write good educational programs.

Next time, I'll be showing portions of a video tape that I recently received from WACO. The tape will demonstrate several 8-bit programs running on an ST, courtesy of the ST Emulator. Hope to see you in August. Until then, happy computing!

JULY ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

Once again, on a hot, hot day, I wondered whether anyone would show up for the CHAOS ST meeting. But 18 people showed up, again one more than last month. While we always get a few who don't yet own an ST, this meeting had mostly ST owners. Sally Nagy did much of the demoing, showing new public domain software in the library. Among many other programs, she showed the "Atari - Power without the Price" demo, a space shuttle demo (that seemed to run itself), and a preview of Dungeon Master, soon to be released by FTL. The graphics of Dungeon Master were very nice, I hope the game is as good. Seems that a non-playable demonstration version of software is becoming a routine form of advertising.

Some talk discussed ST hardware reliability. A member with 3 ST's had 2 problems in a month, one monochrome monitor died, and one system unit. To me (a two ST person), this was maybe bad luck. The most common problem that I know of, the "loose chips on old ST's", is easily solved by opening the case and pressing down on all the socketed chips (and I've never had to do this on my 1040, only my very early 520). And, of course, I carefully throw my ST's in the trunk of my car once a week, which can't be the best environment for any computer. Has anybody else had an ST monitor give up the ghost?

Next meeting (August) will have a demo of firstCADD, a 2D drafting and design package for the ST. Also DBASIC from DTACK, which touts itself as the greatest. We'll see, and report next month.

Disk Library

ST LIBRARY
By Sally Nagy

More new disks for all. This month there are disks only for monochrome users. UTILITIES C11, with Joshua, TI59, Address, Monitor Mod text file, and ; Graphic Display #7 with demos featuring Bananas, Pics, and more.

Other disks available are:
Graphic Display #8-10 -- featuring demos of commercial games (Wander, Airball, KarateII, Aliants) and other fun things. Like a new Amiga emulator.

Sound/Music #6 -- More Music Studio songs and Musiccomm. Find a friend with a modem and try this out.

Utilities B12 -- The disk is arced full of GFA BASIC tips and utility files. One helping you gain control of Dialog Boxes.

Utilities C12-13 -- More basic utilities. Twister a disk formater, printer set up files, Dvorak accessory, and more.

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

G.R.A.S.S. is on summer break.

No Meeting in AUGUST, join us again in SEPTEMBER, when we resume meeting at the WYOMING LIBRARY, 3350 Michael S.W., on the first Wednesday of each month. The Informal meeting begins at 6:30 PM, with the formal meeting starting at 8 PM.

President: Ron Fargo
Treasurer; George Nosky
Secretary: Chuck Baughman

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST
SEPT 8 TOPIC ANNOUNCED IN SUMMER NEWSLETTER

NO MEETING IN AUGUST! Next meeting SEPTEMBER 8, at WINES SCHOOL unless otherwise notified. The "permanent" meeting place may be changed due to expenses and conveniece. Investigation of locations at Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan is in progress.

WAUG has a reserved spot in the ATARI MAGIC SHOW, the ATARIFEST at the Southfield Hilton Hotel, August 28-30. Come and see us and ALL the world of ATARI!

HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are $10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are $5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for $2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library ($5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

TREASURE CHEST BBS: 313-439-2816 (1200/300)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 39 W. Main #6, Milan, MI 48160

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

by DANIEL YOUNGS

No meeting this month, so I can't give a report on what we discussed. But there are a few things that need to be brought to your attention. They are:

The BBS is up and running!!! Can you believe it! I thought we would never get it up. A special thanks to Frank for all the work he has put into it. The number is 616-657-2665 all callers are welcome.

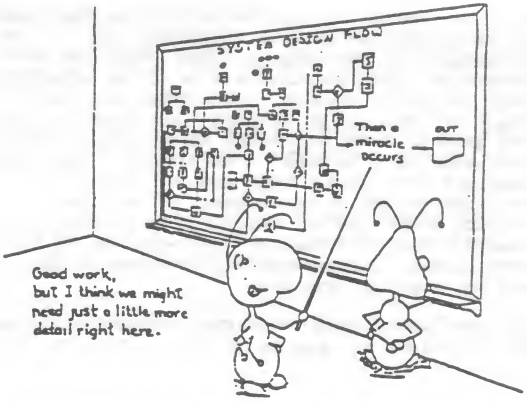
As most of you know the Chicago Trip has been called, so we aren't going. But there is going to be one in Detroit. I can't make it, but if anyone wants to car pool over, watch the BBS for more info.

We need to get all the dues paid up as soon as we can and we needed to get new people signed up (we now have a BBS to pay for). If you need a copy of the news letter to give to someone, let me know, I have some extra copies.

We will not have a meeting in August, but will start again in September.

The library has been traded, so we now have about double the programs we had before. Watch for this in September.

That's it for this month. Call the BBS for the latest news.



TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

August 8th at 2:00 pm.
September 12th at 2:00 pm.

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk Lib.	790-1980
Lance Middleton	ST Disk Librarian	
Ron Hoffman	Assis. ST Disk Lib.	

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8- bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non- TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

Due to problems with summer vacations during the summer months, none of us received our July newsletters until the end of July. Chances are good that this issue (August) will not reach you in time for the August meeting. I've talked to John Nagy about it, and he says that we should be back on track by September -- he also apologizes for the inconvenience.

June was our normal month to hold elections. It didn't happen (due to no meeting), and we moved it back to July, and since the turnout was light due to the late newsletter we will now hold elections in August. All offices are open for anyone who wishes to run. The offices for TAG are:

President
Secretary/Treasurer
8-bit Disk Librarian
ST Disk Librarian
Editor

In particular, we are looking for a new ST disk librarian, as Lance now has other commitments, and an Editor for the newsletter. The Editor would be responsible for writing the Hot Flashes and Relics to Relish and for organizing the newsletter (I would still supply the Presidential Address (if I'm still president after elections) and the ST Notes column).If you feel that you have something to contribute, please volunteer yourself. Remember, things get done better if you do them yourself!

Also, anyone interested in writing a regular 8-bit column (you need a modem to transfer it to the Editor) please feel free to volunteer.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The hot month of August brings some HOT! public domain software to the TAG meeting. We'll be showing off several PD programs for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and everything that is shown will be available at the meeting on a special disk called (appropriately) the HOT AUGUST BYTE.

This disk is meant to be a surprise, so I won't leak out actual titles. However, on the 8-bit side look for a dynamite game and a special type of labeler, and for the ST's we'll have some great hard disk utilities and some fantastic games!

We will raffle off News Station this month...no matter what! I simply forgot to raffle it off

at the last meeting. Show up and win this great package for the 8-bit.

If you'de like to see an ST running IBM software, show up at the September meeting. I just purchased PC-Ditto, and it seems to work great! Look for a review in the next issue of MAM. So far it runs everything but IBM basic (none of the clones run IBM basic either).

Meeting Minutes

RELICS TO RELISH

The meeting started out with a lot of talk about the upcoming Atari Magic Show to be held at the Southfield Hilton on August 28,29, and 30th. I'm planning to go down on Saturday, the 29th, but my car is already full, so if you want to go, contact other people in the club and make plans. Better yet, make plans at the August meeting!

We talked about changing our current meeting time from 2:00 pm to 11:00 am (still on the second Saturday). Everybody should think about this and voice their opinions, because we'lll be making a decision at the September meeting!

Al Jennings then demoed his 1050 Happy drive and it's backup capabilities. He says that he has yet to find a program that it won't backup. In addition to letting you back up all of your hard earned software, you get the side benefit of true double density on the 1050 drive. Happy computers also supplies you with the capability to make a "compacted" disk. This allows you to put multiple protected programs on one disk for easy archiving. You also get the DOS XL Warp speed dos by OSS. Let me tell you, you've never heard a 1050 run so fast before! A Happy enhancement is a hardware add-on for the 1050 disk drive and costs about $125.

The next program that Al demoed was Chipmunk, a program that actually removes protection...and it really works! The program can only back up software that is on it's menu, but the list includes about 90-95% of all protected software ever written for the 8-bits. Once a backup is made, you can copy the backup with a standard sector editor. The real beauty of this program is that it works on any drive! Chipmunk retails for $40.

LeRoy Valley then demoed Procopy 1.40 and ST Copy 3.0 for the ST. Currently Procopy is the only backup program that can backup a protected double sided disk. It can also copy individual tracks on a disk. This allows you to move protected software from a single sided disk to a double sided disk. LeRoy demonstrated the process of converting a single sided protected disk to a double sided disk. Although Procopy is not GEM based, it is very easy to run using the function keys and, most importantly, it works!

ST Copy 3.0 is GEM based and is very easy to run, but it can't back up a double sided protected disk and it can't back up an individual track. It also can't back up any of the newer software like Gold Runner, Karate Kid II, and Arctic Fox.

After the demos LeRoy showed off several new PD programs, and made copies for members present.

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Ted Beauchamp Computer and drive
Marty Schmidt Monitor

ST Equipment Volunteers:

LeRoy Valley Monitor & Hard drive
Marty Schmidt 1040 ST

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're scheduled to bring equipment and you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL ME!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

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Western Australia 6010
Tel. 09-385-1885

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Editor's Note

Presidential Mumblings for August
by Jim Steele

Welcome to the GAG section for August. Longtime members will remember that there is no meeting scheduled, so we'll see you in September. Have a great summer vacation.

If you just have to have an Atari fix, the Atari Magic show is August 28-30 at the Southfield Hilton. At-the-door tickets are $5 per day or $10 for all 3 days. We are sort of unofficial co-sponsers of the show. So let's have as many GAG members there as possible.

We are still looking for volunteers to act as gofers and other such jobs around the show. As a volunteer you get your admission free. Can't beat that deal! If you're interested, contact Jerry Cross on the FACTS BBS (313- 736-3920) or by phone at 313-736-4544. We definitely can use the help. Not just GAG members either, all volunteers are welcome.

Speaking of help, I notice that the newsletter is getting a little thin here in the GAG section. I've ran out of things to say over the past 3 years as GAG el Presidente. Cynics will probably note that you can't "run out" of something you never had, but what do they know? What I'm asking for is some more input from you. Fame! Glory! Write an article...

Till next time, Jim
Next Meetings:

August- No Meetings scheduled
September 9, 6:30pm Neithercut
September 26, 10am National Computer Clinic

Library Non-news for August
by Jim Steele

Well, since we're not meeting this month, there are no new disks to add to the vast collection. Jerry tells me that he has boxes full of disks obtained from other clubs. Sorting through these will no doubt provide some good stuff in the comming months. And knowing Gil, I'm sure he's got some goodies in store for you ST fans.

What? another format, department.

Just what you needed, right? Well, this one is a good idea. The folk at Compuserve have come up with a new graphics standard called GIF - the "Graphic Interchange Format". With Degas, Neo, Tiny, IFF and who knows what, who needs another,eh? GIF does have a couple of things going for it. First off, it compresses the data and does a better job than ARC. That saves time and disk space.

The real handy feature is the support for many different computers. Naturally Compuserve is not going to limit their service to just one system. They intend GIF to be the color version of the monochrome "RLE" format they've used for years. GIF supports the ST, Amiga, Apple GS,IBM, and Macintosh. By supporting many computers, the art collector has access to more files. We can all benefit by sharing those digitized playmates. (That's a satirical plea for more original art.)

At present, it doesn't look like the 8-bit machines will be able to use GIF. There's just not the resolution there. Maybe something with a scrolling display list and DLI's? Hey Atari, how about an upgrade to the XL like Apple's GS upgrade to the ancient IIe.

Genesee Atari Group is a non profit group of Atari users in and around Flint, Michigan. GAG dues are $15 per year. Membership includes access to our disk libraries, print libraries, and our newsletter (currently included in this publication). Contact:
Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

Atari News

The Atari-Magic Show Update....

The Detroit Atari show is only a few weeks away. In case you've just returned from the moon, or were out of the country someplace working for the Contras, here is a little background on what's going on.

Atari has been co-hosting AtariFest shows around the country with local user groups. So far, over a dozen shows have been held in Dallas, Pittsburg, Buffalo, San Diago, and many more.

The idea behind these shows is to give Atari users a chance to talk directly to the people who design and manufacture Atari software and hardware. Also, there will be several local dealers selling Atari products, plus several area usergroups. This is your chance to catch up on all the latest news about upcoming products, and get an first-hand look at the new Atari products, such as the Mega-ST, Game Machine, Laser Printer, Modem, 80-column card, and much more.

Several software developers will also be on hand to discuss their products, and show off newly released programs. Planning to attend the show are Best Electronics, Mars Merchandising, QMI, Sector one, Atari Corp, Hybrid Arts, Michtron, Atari Explorer, ST Express, Alpha Systems, AStra Systems, Electronical Software, Riteway, Abacus, FCA, Chipmonk, Basic Bits and Bytes, and ICD. Over 30 vendors are expected to attend.

There will be a full schedule of seminars on such topics as desktop publishing, midi-music, programming, telecommunications, hardware, and much more! Guest speakers include Gordon Monnier and Thimothy Purves (Michtron), Sandi Austin and Neil Harris (Atari), Frank Foster (Hybrid Arts), Tom Harker (ICD), and several more.

There will also be a MIDI music concert. Tom Synden of Peterson Music will be on hand to show what you can really to with an Atari ST, and to answer any questions you may have.

And don't forget to try your hand at the MIDI-MAZE contest! First prize will be a CASIO keyboard plus software, valued at over $800! MIDI-MAZE is a multi-player, multi-computer maze game that will be played on 16 Atari ST computers! These contests have been held at other AtariFests, and were a great hit!

The Atari-Magic show will be held August 28-30 at the Southfield Hilton hotel, located on Nine Mile Rd. near Greenfield, in Southfield Michigan. Show times are:

Friday	6pm-9pm
Saturday	10am-6pm
Sunday	11am-5pm

Admission is $5, or you can get a 3-day pass for $10. Advance tickets can be obtained from your local user groups, or by mailing a check to:

The Atari Magic Show
28111 Imperial Dr
Warren, Mi. 48093

Advance tickets are $4 and $8.

If you would like further information, call the Magic Hotline (recording) at 313-751-8291 or the UserGroup Coordinator at 313-736-4544.

Industry Report

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SANTA CLARA SHOW DEBUTS - "FINALIZED" ATARI LASER PRINTER - NEAR-BETA WORD PERFECT...& MORE
BY NAT FRIEDLAND, ANTIC EDITOR
6/21/87

With all the other Atari Fairs that took place during the past 12 months and the huge Consumer Electronics Show just weeks ago, it was surprising to find so much new to see last weekend during the hastily-organized World of Atari Faire at the year-old Santa Clara Convention Center

But several unfamiliar companies with impressive ST software made their Atari Fair debuts last weekend. And a near-production version of the Atari SLM804 laser printer had its first public showing. This report concentrates on products that have not been reported on previously.

The Atari laser printer is smaller and lighter than most current models, but seems just about as fast and sharp. It was operating in Diablo 630 emulation with a 4Mb Mega ST running a pre-release version of the Microsoft Write word processor with a WYSIWYG display. The laser

controller board is in a modem-sized box cabled between the ST's high-speed Direct Memory Access (DMA) port and the printer. This controller box also has a second DMA port for connecting a hard disk.

This 300 dots-per-inch printer supports Atari's GDOS (which automatically uses the highest resolution available to a printing device). We picked up a selection of the sharp graphics and muli-font printouts that the Atari SLM804 kept churning out throughout the day. Late summer or September is the current estimated market arrival for the Atari Desktop Publishing System.

At a neighboring booth, Word Perfect was showing a near-beta version of the forthcoming ST edition of its bestselling word processor. The GEM-based software, due in September, looked extremely fast and powerful. It will list at $395 but is often discounted by more than 50% in the IBM version. The WP rep said that the company is working closely with Publishing Partner's developers to assure immediate desktop publishing compatibility for the word processor.

Programmers will love Omniware's new Edit/Booster, an ST text editor that also generates GEM code by mouse. Select "Draw A Circle" from a drop-down menu and the GEM code apppears in your program. The version currently on sale just works with C, but updates for GFA BASIC, Personal Pascal and Modula-2 are promised soon. Omniware, based in Bellevue, Washington also showed a desk accessory controller for the widely used Hewlett-Packard Laserjet printer and an H-P terminal emulator.

Iliad Software of Orem, Utah, another new entry, showed a powerful, user-friendly CAD/drawing program, Athena II, selling for $99.95. Athena requires a 1Mb ST, but functions in either color or monochrome. Coming soon is a circuit-testing simulation program called Circuit Maker. The company was also showing a multiuser, multitasking operating system, PDOS, which is similar to the system used on 68000-based VME workstations.

A wide-ranging product line of specialized business applications for the ST was shown by Hi-Tech Advisors of Winter Haven, Florida. Their $199 titles included Church Manager, Service Station Manager, Video Store Manager, Inventory Pro and Sales Pro Plus. Mail Pro handles custom mailing lists and form letters for just $69. SBT of Sausalito, California kicked off a line of dBASE III business accounting modules based on the ST's dBMAN clone.

Beckemeyer Development Tools of Oakland, California showed their latest addition, a touch-screen restaurant menu system. The demonstration model for a Chinese restaurant was almost frighteningly complete and efficient.

Two image scanners were shown at the fair. Navarone, of Sonora, California had a $1,239 ST system including the Canon IX-12 scanner. The simpler $99.95 IMG Scan from Seymor-Radix of Irving, TX used a small box that tapes to the print head of any dot matrix printer that supports graphics.

Old-timer Lou Schwing of Astra Systems was gleefully demonstrating the ruggedness of his HD+ unit which combines an 20Mb hard disk and a double-sided ST 3.5" disk. The HD+ was notably cool and even kept operating as he waved it in the air and laid it on its side. DeskCart, a $99.95 cartridge from Quantum Micro of Liverpool, New York is a real-time clock/calendar with a full set of Sidekick-type desk accessories including a filer, calculator, address book, notebook, macros, RAMdisk driver and other utilities. The cartridge format is claimed to save memory and operate faster.

The World of Atari was busy and profitable for most exhibitors throughout its Friday-Saturday run. The thriving Antic booth was showing upcoming ST graphics software from The Catalog -- Cyber Paint, a paint program that creates images for animation with Cybermate, and Spectrum 512, a smooth-lined, ultra-clear paint program that can display all the ST's 512 colors simultaneously.

REVIEW OF GFA BASIC
By Sally Nagy

EVERYTHING IN CONVENTIONAL BASICS
PLUS MUCH MUCH MORE.

How would you like a hundred plus new commands not found in ST BASIC? That's what GFA BASIC from Michtron has.

Commands create Alert boxes, make it possible to create and modify the menu bar and handle other menu selections.

GFA BASIC has new tricks for your Mouse: MOUSE, MOUSEX, MOUSEY, MOUSEK, HIDEM, SHOWM, and DEFMOUSE. These help you define the mouse form, choose a pre-existing one, hide or show the mouse, and show its location.

GFA BASIC has DPOKE, LPOKE, SPOKE, SDPOKE, SLPOKE, DPEEK, and LPEEK commands, besides POKE and PEEK that are found in ST BASIC. These commands write 1, 2, or 4 bytes into an area of memory beginning at a specified address... plus...

New graphic commands produce filled in shapes, PBOX, PCIRCLE, PELLIPSE, PRBOX.

You begin to get the picture?

GFA BASIC is no lazy basic! It loads and executes machine code programs (assembled programs) or compiled programs (compiled C programs) from disk by using it's high-speed Interpreter.

GFA BASIC'S user-friendly editor makes it easy to use the mouse or keyboard. At a glance, the editor's capacity to copy, move, save, and print block becomes evident. Like a word processor, Search and Replace String commands are also available.

Using only 55K of memory, GFA BASIC works with no line numbers with one command per line. Labels structure the program. All line commands are placed by the program's interpreter, some are indented according to their part of the function.

It's 297 page manual has a complete index of all commands displayed on two facing pages. One easy glance quickly locates further information.

Other sections list all the error messages found in BASIC, BOMBS, TOS and the EDITOR; and all the ASCII Codes.

And if that isn't slick enough, the GFA BASIC DISK, includes a READ.ME file updating the manual. The Interpreter, GFABASIC.PRG, and GFABASRO.PRG, "run only" program, which allows others without GFA BASIC to run the programs you develop. STKILL.BAS makes it possible to remove the line numbers from ST BASIC programs and split multi-line commands into one line commands. The transformed program loads into the editor with the MERGE option.

GFA BASIC works with either Color or Monochrome System. For best results use either High or Medium Resolutions.

OTHER COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE
SUPPORTING GFA BASIC

The GFA BASIC COMPILER converts your finished programs into compact, fast-running machine language files.

GFA VECTOR, 3-D graphics program.

And GFA DRAFT, graphics design.

REPORTED COMING SOON:

GFA CONSTRUCTION KIT, to create dialog boxes.

PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE SUPPORT
FOR GFA BASIC:

The C.H.A.O.S St Library has 2 disks with GFA BASIC GAMES, A2 and D1; and 2 Utilities Disks that have tips on writing GFA BASIC programs and utilities, B7 and B12.

Review Eight

Daisy Dot Near Letter Quality Emulation
(for Star and Epson Printers)
Reviewed by Warren Lieuallen
(Reprinted from Fuji Facts)

I have had my Star SG-10 for nearly two years now, and am still very happy with it. It is a full-featured dot matrix printer, and performs every task I have requested of it. It even has a good quality near letter quality (NLQ) mode. Unfortunately, the NLQ character set is, in my opinion, "funny looking". I've always wished there was something I could do about it. Well, now there is.

Available from CompuServe and GEnie, Daisy Dot is a program written by Roy Goldman of Denver. Daisy Dot is written in compiled Turbo BASIC (also available in the ACEC Disk Library), which means that it will only work on the XL and XE models. It currently supports the Star Micronics and Epson printers. Most "Epson-compatible" printers will probably work as well.

Daisy Dot allows you to print any ASCII/ATASCII file, using the traditional "double pass" NLQ printing approach. This means that the printer will print a line of characters, then advance the paper a very small amount (1/144th of an inch), and print the line again, filling any gaps in the printed characters. The approach Daisy Dot takes differs however, in that the NLQ character set is not the one originally supplied with your printer, but one of your own choosing!

This program includes both the main file printing program, as well as a font editor, for creating your own custom character sets. Printing a file is very straightforward. The program prompts you for the font you would like to use (Daisy Dot is supplied with five different fonts. You can add on as many as you'd like.), and then the file you'd like to print. You are then asked what density you

would like to print (four are supported), which will control not only the resolution, but also the number of possible columns on the page. **Finally, you must decide how much space to leave between characters. Daisy Dot fonts are proportionally spaced (an "m" is much wider than an "i"), and can have from 0 to 20 columns of space between them. Following any necessary disk swapping, printing then proceeds.**

The file that you are going to print must be properly formatted, however. A standard file saved with a word processor will not work. Instead, after saving the file, you must also "print" it to disk (thereby creating an ATASCII file with no printer control codes). Both PaperClip and AtariWriter Plus have this feature (the original AtariWriter does not, but this can be corrected with the AIWFMT program from the ACEC Disk Library). It is this "printed" text file that Daisy Dot will actually print.

The font editor that is supplied is similar to many of the other Atari character set editors, in that by using the joystick, you draw each character on a grid on the screen. This editor is somewhat limited: you cannot see the character set on the screen, and many of the more sophisticated commands for moving columns and rows are missing. Nonetheless, it is quite adequate, especially considering that very few people will actually be creating a new character set. More likely, this editor will be used to slightly modify certain characters that you happen to think you can make better.

As an enhancement to the editor, an Atari character set conversion program is also available. Many of you are familiar with the custom character sets available for the Atari (the common, nine sector .FNT files). These files may now be converted into NLQ Daisy Dot fonts. Once this is done, they usually require some editing, as Daisy Dot is capable of better resolution than the 9x9 Atari character matrix.

A separate version of the program is available for the Star SG-10, to compensate for the non-standard line spacing on this printer. The methods used to compensate for this difference are invisible to the user, and you can select to cancel them if you wish.

Thorough documentation is included with the programs, even though it really isn't needed. Both the printing and font editor programs are menu-driven, and are as easy to use as The Print Shop. These programs were very well thought-out and designed, and Mr. Goldman is to be congratulated.

In short, if you have a Star or Epson printer, you should have Daisy Dot. This elegant and powerful program expands the capabilities of your printer, and will allow you to easily produce very good quality output.

(Publishers comment: I was very pleased with the performance of DAISY-DOT, so much so that we did extensive testing to see if it would be usable for MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. As it turned out, the best spacing and reductions left too much space between lines... So I contacted ROY GOLDMAN at his Utah home. Roy listened to the problem and volunteered to make a special version of DAISY DOT that allowed adjustable line spacing. Two days later he called to say it was ready! I have worked with it and we may in fact start using it next issue. It still requires a lot of extra work to use DAISY-DOT for a newsletter, since two extra stages must be added to the printing process, and any editing requires reloading the entire word processor and starting the print process over. Nevertheless, we will try it and see if you think the result is worth the effort.

Roy is a very young programmer, but has had several popular PUBLIC DOMAIN programs already. One was his DETECT program that analyzed files to determine whether they were SCRUNCHED, ARCed, SQUISHED, etc. I expect that he has many more great programs to come from his fertile young mind... hes still in his MID TEENS! -John Nagy)

ST

ST NOTES
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

This month lets take a look at some great new PD software.

If you want a way of cataloging all of those disks AND you'de also like to print some disk labels from the stored database along the way, check out DISCAT by Matt Leber. First let me state that this is Shareware, not public domain! If you're really going to use it, send Mr. Leber a check for $5. For another $5, you can get the complete 2.0 version. A demo version of 2.0 is available on Genie and complete (but older) versions are also available.

This program reads the directory of the disk (Hard disks too!) and allows you to add descriptions for each file. You can tag files to appear on the disk labels (up to 33) and they get printed out on either 2.75" x 2.75" or 2.75" x 1.875" labels in condensed print. The disk number is also printed out at the top of the label. DISCAT can sort by filename, extension, or disk number. Version 2.0 allows

you to search for a file or disk in the database and also allows you to have up to 32,767 disks (Whew!). You can delete an entire disk to facilitate updating an existing disk. This is really an excellent program, well worth the $10 for version 2.0.

Want to speed up access times on your hard drive (this also works with or without a disk cacher)? Download DLII (or get it from our library) from Genie. This program reorganizes your hard drive to maximize access. It also will fix potential problems with cross linked sectors and damaged directories on hard drives. Although Genie has a notice that some people have had problems with this program, I've used it on my Supra 20 MB with no problems whatsoever...well, OK, one problem. If you've got an Auto folder with several programs which have to run in a certain order, then your system may not work right after rebooting. DLII might screw up the order of the programs. Just delete them, and move them back in in the proper sequence.

Well, due to the hot weather, I'm going to keep it short and sweet this month. See you in September, when I'll be featuring a review of PC-Ditto, an IBM emulator for the ST!

Review ST

...PM Utility from ToolBox...
ZMAG ST SOFTWARE REVIEW
(author uncredited in ZMAG)

PM Utility
Toolbox Software
234 Bristol
San Antonio, TX 78214

Have you ever needed a cute piece of clip art for your artwork or paper? Maybe you have a need for customizing your PrintMaster(C) picture library? Perhaps you're tired of searching through all of your picture libraries for that 'just right' Christmas picture you were sure you had. Or maybe you've had it with all those unwanted pictures cluttering up your library?

PM Utility is a handy utility for anyone who owns PrintMaster(C) or any program that makes use of Degas(C) compatible picture files. With PM Utility you can transfer picture libraries to Degas(C) picture format as well as modify individual pictures or entire picture libraries.

On a library scale you can:

Sort - This sorts the contents of a library in ALPHA order.

Transfer - Move pictures from one library to another.

Clip Art - Transfer a library (or selected pics) to a DEGAS(C) compatible picture file.

Simple - scaling of size is supported.

Print Out - Print a hardcopy of your library to almost any Dot Matrix printer. Each picture IS titled as well as the listing.

On an individual picture basis you can:

Copy - Append a copy of a selected picture to the end of the current library.

Rename - Renames a picture.

Delete - Deletes selected pictures.

View - See the selected pictures.

Graphic Ops - Alter the picture the following ways:

Inverse -Reverses the image. (Black to White).

Flip - Makes a picture a mirror image of itself. (Left faced pictures become right faced)

Rotate - Rotates image in 90 degree increments.

NOTE: THAT SOME OF THE IMAGE IS LOST BECAUSE THE PICTURES ARE WIDER THAN THEY ARE HIGH.

PMU (PM Utility) is fully GEM based and works in either monochrome or medium resolution. 512K ram and TOS in ROM is required.

All of the functions are logically implemented and make use of the GEM interface. One of the features I like is the heavy use of safeguards to protect the picture libraries. Another handy feature is the checking of free disk space BEFORE an operation. This helps to ensure that saving your work is possible. While it is not fool-proof, it is a handy feature.

Toolbox Software is apparently a Home-grown type software package. The author, Marcos Zorola, sells the software by mail. For $13 its a bargain. A demo of this program can be found on the Download section of GEnie's Atari ST sig.

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Atari ST Technical

ST DISK DIRECTORIES
Author Unknown
(Found on a BBS...)

For those of you that have gone from the 8-bit ATARI computers to the 16-bit ATARI ST's, there have been many surprises for you in the past months. Among them is probably " What do I do with all of this extra memory.", or maybe " The graphics on this system sure are something." and one of my favorites, " That disk holds a lot of data." All of these statements are true for obvious reasons. For the longest time there was only 48K of ram available in the ATARI Systems, so jumping to 512K is a fantastic leap. The same holds true for the graphics capability of the new ATARI, by going to a monitor and improving the resolution, another big leap has been made. But, one of the most important improvements to me has been the disk storage. After using an ATARI 810 disk drive for several years, going to 360K per disk is great. Now, since I have that off my chest, I would like to go a little deeper and try to explain some of the differences in the way the ST disks (single sided) are handled. The ST disk is divided into 80 tracks (0 thru 79), 9 sectors per track (1 thru 9), and is written in QUAD density (512 bytes per sector). When a disk is formatted, a Boot sector (track 0, sector 1), the File Allocation Tables (it starts at track 0, sector 2) and the Directory (it starts at track 1, sector 3) are established using all 18 sectors in the first two tracks. The remaining sectors (tracks 2 thru 79, sectors 1 thru 9) are initialized in pairs or by cluster (two sectors = one cluster). As a cluster is initialized the File Allocation Table (F.A.T.) is updated to indicate the status of the cluster; this continues until all 351 data clusters have been completed. If a cluster cannot be formatted or initialized, the corresponding entry in F.A.T. is marked not-available and will remain that way until the disk is re-formatted or thrown-away. If a cluster is marked as bad, the F.A.T. entry will contain a number between $FF0 and $FF7. That range of numbers simply means the cluster is un-usable and will never used to store data.

The ST disk uses track 2, sector 1 thru track 79, sector 9 to store any files you write to the disk. All filenames are listed on the disk directory in the order they are entered. The directory is seven (7) sectors long and has room for 112 entries, with each entry being 32 bytes in length. Each entry contain the Filename and Extension, the file Attributes, the Time the last change was made to the file, the Date the last change was made to the file, the number of the first cluster in the file, and the length (in bytes) of the file. In addition, there are 10 bytes that have been reserved for future use (see fig.1).

Fig.1 ST Directory Fields

1) Filename 8 bytes bytes 0 thru 7
2) Filename Ext. 3 bytes bytes 8 thru 10
3) Attributes 1 byte byte 11
4) RESERVED 10 bytes bytes 12 thru 21
5) Time of Last Change 2 bytes bytes 22 and 23
6) Date of Last Change 2 bytes bytes 24 and 25
7) First Cluster Number 2 bytes bytes 26 and 27
8) File Size (in bytes) 4 bytes bytes 28 thru 31

The Filename and Extension are the first two fields in each entry of the directory. They take up the first 11 bytes of an entry and follow the same format as the ATARI 800 or the IBM PC, with one small exception. If the first character of an entry is $E5, the file has been deleted and is no longer available for your use. If no changes have been made to the disk since the file was deleted, it may be possible to recover it by using one of the many sector editors available.

The Attributes field is one byte long and contains a number that indicates any special or unique characteristics about this entry. There are only five bits of the entry used on the floppies at this time, and they are listed in Fig. 2.

fig.2 Attributes

Bit 0 - Read Only (not set if the file is Read-Write)
Bit 1 - Hidden
Bit 2 - System
Bit 3 - Volume Label (Name assigned to the disk)
Bit 4 - Sub-Directory (Folder Name)
Bit 5 - Archive (This will be used on the Hard Disks)
Bit 6 & 7 are not used at this time

The next field is marked RESERVED and is 10 bytes long. This field will be filled with 00's on all disk entries and no plans for its use are known at this time.

The Time of Last Change field is 2 bytes long and is updated each time you write to a file. This field contains the HOURS, MINUTES, and SECONDS(/2) of the last change to the file. This field is in the low-byte, high-byte format and uses all 16 bits. Starting with the highest bit, it uses 5 bits for the Hour, 6 bits for the Minutes and the last 5 bits for the Seconds. (The value in the seconds portion of the field must be multiplied by 2 to get the correct seconds count.)

The Date of Last Change field is handled almost the same as the previous field. This field is changed along with the Time of Last Change, and is also in the low-byte, high-byte format. Starting with the highest bit, use 7 bits for the Year, 4 bits for the Month, and the last 5 bits for the Day. Don't be to surprised when the year equals a 5 (as most files will) because the year stored has 1980 subtracted from it.

The First Cluster field contains the number of the first cluster used for the file. The cluster information is stored in high-byte, low-byte order and should never go above $15F (351), since there are only 351 clusters.

The File Size field is a value equal to the number of bytes used in the file. This number divided by 1024 (1k) will tell you how many clusters are being used for the file (cluster * 2 = sectors).

The File Allocation Table (F.A.T.) starts on track 0, sector 2, and may be the most important table on the disk. F.A.T. is used to keep track of the sector linkage for all data sectors. It is also used for files listed in Folders (sub-directories, see Attributes). The F.A.T. is five sectors long and is valuable enough to be have a duplicate table on the same disk. The location of the second F.A.T. is currently track 0, sector 7, but that is subject to change at any time.

The best way to think of the F.A.T. is like a puzzle. Each entry of the F.A.T. is 12 bits long (not bytes, bits), and the values range from $000 to $FFF (see fig.3). Byte 0 of F.A.T. tells what density the disk is formatted in ($F7 is normal for byte $00), and bytes 1 and 2 will $FF as they are not used. The rest of the table is used as follows. (I'll be using the F.A.T. from the disk I have been working on for my examples. see fig.3) Before I begin I should point out that 12 bits per entry means that 2 entries equal 3 hex characters (bytes). We will start with bytes 03, 04, and 05 for our first 2 entries (see fig.3). Byte 03 will be bits 0 thru 7 of the first 12 bit entry, and bits 0 to 3 of byte 04 will be bits 8 thru 11 of the first entry. As you can see in the first example, the number is $FFF. In F.A.T., if an entry contains $FF8 thru $FFF it means the cluster is the last cluster of the file (EOF). Also, if an entry contains $FF0 thru $FF7 it means the cluster is not usable for some reason. Now, if you will return to byte 04, you will remember that we have only used 4 bits (0 to 3). Bits 4 thru 7 of byte 04 will become bits 0 thru 3 of the second entry and byte 05 will be used as bits 4 thru 11. This entry indicates that cluster 4 will be the next cluster for this file and it continues in that manner for the rest of the table.

Fig.3 (in hex) -- F.A.T. --

```
0  1  2  3  4  5  6+ 7  8  9  A  B  C  D  E  F

   0  F7 FF FF FF 4F 00 05 60 00 07 80 00 09 A0
   00 0B 10 C0 00 0D E0 00 0D 00 01 11 F0 FF 13
   40 01 15 60 20 01 17 F0 FF 19 A0 01 1B C0 01
   1D E0 01 1F 00 02 30 21 20 02 23 40 02 25 60
   02 27 80 02 29 A0 02 2B
```

Fig.4 Track & Sectors = CLUSTERS

```
BOOT SECT < FAT #1 > < FAT
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 0.8 | 0.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

#2 > < Disk Directory (7 Sectors) >
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

< CLU #2 > < CLU #3 > < CLU #4 > < CLU #5 > < CLU
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

#6 > < CLU #7 > < CLU #8 > < CLU #9 > < CLU #10 >
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
| 3.1 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 3.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

|| \||/

< CLU #334> < CLU #335> < CLU #336> < CLU #337> < CLU
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|76.1 |76.2 |76.3 |76.4 |76.5 |76.6 |76.7 |76.8 |76.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

#338> < CLU #339> < CLU #340> < CLU #341> < CLU #342>
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|77.1 |77.2 |77.3 |77.4 |77.5 |77.6 |77.7 |77.8 |77.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

< CLU #343> < CLU #344> < CLU #345> < CLU #346> < CLU
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|78.1 |78.2 |78.3 |78.4 |78.5 |78.6 |78.7 |78.8 |78.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+

#347> < CLU #348> < CLU #349> < CLU #350> < CLU #351>
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
|79.1 |79.2 |79.3 |79.4 |79.5 |79.6 |79.7 |79.8 |79.9 |
+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+-----+
```

Now you know what cluster to look at but maybe you want to know which track and sector that is. The quickest way I've come with is one of the following formulas,

a) To convert from Cluster to Track and Sector:

(((cluster # + 9) * 2)- 1) / 9 = track

(((cluster # + 9) * 2) - (track # * 9) = sector

b) To convert from Track and Sector to Cluster:

(((track # * 9) + sector #) - 17) / 2 = cluster #

A brief explanation:

Data sectors start at Track 2, Sector 1. That means 18 sectors (or 9 clusters) have to be accounted for in the formula. Also there are 2 sectors per cluster so you must multiply by 2 at some point. Here is all there is to it, what cluster is Track 22, Sector 3 ?? I'll put the numbers into the formula.

```
( ( ( 22 * 9 ) + 3 ) - 17 ) / 2 = cluster #
( ( 198 + 3 ) - 17 ) / 2 = cluster #
( 201 - 17 ) / 2 = cluster #
184 / 2 = cluster #
92 = cluster #
```

If there had been a remainder, it would have been the second sector in the cluster. Thats all there is to it, but just so you can practice a little, I included a chart with some of the Clusters marked with the Track and Sector (see fig.4).

ZMAG SPECIAL REPORT ...Computer Security Act...

Even with the Reagan administration's backing, the House Of Representatives' Computer Security Act of 1987 (HR 145) must still dodge National Security Agency (NSA) opposition, which could affect the outcome when the Senate considers the bill this month.

Awaiting its fate, the measure now sits in the Senate. Although the Senate does not currently have companion legislation to match the House, it could either eventually propose its own bill, make some adjustments to the House bill or adopt the House bill in its entirety.

"Right now, the House bill is being held at the desk," said Ann Harkins, chief counsel for the Senate Committee on technology and the law.

The holdup has given the NSA an opportunity to influence the Senate legislation and industry sources said that the NSA is indeed talking to Senate leaders. The NSA declined comment on the whole subject.

"I assume the NSA will fight it all the way, going through the Senate (to argue its case)," said Donald Peyton, director of government relations for the Information Industry Association (IIA) in Washington D.C. "But based on what we know the bill has a good chance of going through the Senate as is."

The NSA has a vested interest in the bill, which places the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) in charge of computer security standards for "sensitive but unclassified" data in the federal government.

Although the NSA and the Defense Department will remain in charge of Classified data, industry sources said that in the eyes of defense- minded officials, the bill still leaves too much information at the fingertips of the public.

"NSA believes that it should control all of the (sensitive but unclassified) information," said one information provider.

Neither was Jack Simpson, President of Mead Data Central Inc. of Dayton, Ohio, sure that the Computer Security Act would smooth ruffled defense establishment feathers. "Its a temporary victory but nothing has been resolved (yet)," he said.

The Defense department started studying data flow in early 1986, when the Air Force dispatched its AFMAG (Air force Management Advisory Group) to check into private industry database services. It was then that Dialog received a visit from AFMAG.

For some other database companies, a visit from Uncle Sam was not so pleasant. Mead Data met AFMAG, FBI and the NSA representatives on various occasions.

At that time, Simpson said, the NSA was "most interested in patents and Nexis" information availability. "They wanted to know how our system worked, who our customers were, and if we could monitor (customer access) and if we could stop (some customers) from accessing some data," Simpson explained.

According to Simpson, these visits as well as visits to other database companies such as CompuServe; EIC Intelligence in N.Y., Chemical Abstract, Columbus, Ohio; and Digital Information Group, Stamford Conn., were all part of a plan to implement restrictions on data availability. Hence the National Telecommunications Information Systems and Security (NTISS) Policy Directive No. 2 issued by former national security adviser Adm. John Poindexter in late 1986

Mead Data's federal guests weren't happy with its National Technical Information Service (NTIS) database, which comes from Department of Commerce public-domain information. As it was, Mead's NTIS offering was not faring well commercially, so the company deleted it from its database in February of this year. "We hoped that would settle this whole issue," Simpson added.

Opponents of the bill argue the "puzzle pieces" theory, where foreign intelligence or domestic hackers could take bits of publicly available data and pull together strategic information that as a sum of its parts could be considered classified.

FUNSTUFF

COMPUTER QUIZ
By Guy A. Hurt (C.H.A.O.S.)

Below, on the left, are a list of computer (or data processing) items. On the right, is a list of potential definitions for these items. Your mission is to match the terms up with their definitions. More than one term may match up with the same definition, while some items may not have a definition listed. In that event, you may want to use "NO DEFINITION LISTED". Good luck. Answers are included in this issue.

A. ADA	1. computer language
B. analog computer	2. data line that transmits in only one direction
C. APL	3. device that handles numbers by counting
D. BNF	4. device that handles numbers by representing them as physical quantities
E. CRC	5. first electronic digital computer
F. diamond	6. first IBM computer
G. digital computer	7. flowchart symbol for decisions
H. ENIAC	8. flowchart symbol for I/O
I. microsecond	9. flowchart symbol for processes
J. millisecond	10. formal notation for defining syntax
K. nanosecond	11. method for checking errors
L. parallel	12. modify a memory location
M. parallelogram	13. 1 billionth of a second
N. peek	14. 1 millionth of a second
O. rectangle	15. 1 thousandth of a second
P. serial	16. special kind of linked list
Q. simplex	17. squaring function
R. SQR	18. transmitting a series of bits,one at a time
S. tree	19. transmitting a series of bits at a time
T. UNIVAC	20. NO DEFINITION LISTED

ANSWERS
- - - - - - -
A-1 B-4 C-1 D-10 E-11 F-7 G-3 H-5
I-14 J-15 K-13 L-19 M-8 N-20 O-9
P-18 Q-2 R-20 S-16 T-20

Programming

C Language Course Lesson 1:
The Nature of C
July 11/86 by "R.S."

(Editor's note: this series of lessons were uploaded to the CHAOS BBS for use in the magazine but without explanation of who "R.S." was... I hope the author will contact me with more information!)

Welcome to the wonderful world of C. In this course, I will attempt to make you familiar enough with C so you can write your own programs and understand others.

Learning C is not going to be a "walk in the park." What C gives you is a great amount of power over the machine at all levels with the flexibility to match. But you must put the effort into learning it properly. C should not be attempted by people unfamiliar with machine language and/or low-level machine structures.

Computer languages are basically divided into two main categories, languages that are interpreted, and languages that are compiled. An interpreter is a program (usually in ROM) that takes each item in the source file and decodes (interpretes) it. The machine instructions are created as needed, line by line until the end of the source file. As a result of this, each time you want to execute a program, the interpreter must also be in memory. A compiler, on the other hand, takes the entire source file and translates it creating an executable program; therefore, the language does not have to be in memory since the executable program consists of the necessary machine language instructions. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. Interpreted programs are easer to change and re-execute, but are generally much slower than compiled programs. Compiled programs, on the other hand, are harder to changed since they must be re-compiled each time even when a little change is made.

The C Programming Environment

We will first examine the process which transforms C language programs into executable machine code programs. The process has several distinct phases: program creation using an editor, compilation, linkage editing, and debugging. You can visualize the process like this:

KEYBOARD-->EDITOR-->C SOURCE FILE

SOURCE FILE-->COMPILER-->OBJECT MODULE

OBJECT MODULE 1--->LINKER<---OBJECT MODULE N

RESULT: EXECUTABLE FILE

Most C compiler packages include a text editor, the compiler, linker, and a manager commonly referred to as a shell.

The function of the shell is to coordinate all the necessary steps for C program development. Through it you can edit a program, then invoke the compiler, and finally, the linker.

The C Preprocessor

The compilation itself can be subdivided into two steps: a preprocessing step and a compilation step. The C preprocessor is a very useful and often-used feature of the C language. Becuase of its usefulness, we'll discuss some of its features now.

The C preprocessor lets numbers, characters, and strings to be defined symbolically. That is, you can define a symbol (or token) to represent the number, character, or string, and then use the token throughout the program. Because the token is defined only once, its value can be changed throughout a program be changing only one statement. Further, if the token has a descriptive name, your program will be more readable and easier to maintain.

Symbolic constants are defined by using the preprocessor statement #define. Unlike regular C statements, preprocessor statements are required to begin in column 1 of the source line. For example:

```
#define PI 3.141593
```

The preprocessor performs a token replacement on the source file. That is, wherever the token PI is used in the source file, the token PI is replaced by the characters 3.141593. It is a C programming convention that all symbolic preprocessor definitions be in upper case only. This is not absolutely required, but highly suggested. It is also suggested that all #define statements be at the top of the program.

The second form of the #define preprocessor statement is one in which you can define a macro as a token. The macro can contain any valid C statement; for example, suppose you wanted to define a token to represent a formula, like this:

```
#define FORM a * 16.3 + 12
```

This is very handy when you have to repeatedly execute a C statement.

Another often-used feature of the preprocessor is the #include statement. Its syntax is:

#include "filename" or #include <filename>

For our purposes, these two statements are the same. Like all preprocessor statements, it begins in column 1 of the source line. The #include statement reads the named file into the program. This file's text is inserted into the program at the point occupied by the #include statement.

Your First C Program

To begin learning C, let's examine our first program:

```
main() { /* The Famous "Hello World" test */

printf("Hello, World\n"); }
```

Because this is our first C program, let's examine it in some detail. Main is the name of a C function. Every C program has a function called main. The parentheses following the word main indicate that it is a function. Functions are like black boxes of computation and logic. Data can be passed to them and they act on the data according to the instructions they contain. The main function of the this program is not passed any data; that is why there is nothing between the parentheses following its name.

The left brace ({) introduces the statements that define the function main. This version of main begins with a comment. All text between the symbols /* and */ is commentary for the benefit of the programmer or other human readers. Note that the comment may cover more than one physical line. Following the comment, there is one statement:

```
printf("Hello, World\n");
```

Statements are written in free format; that is, they are not required to begin in a particular column, and more than one statement can be written on the same line.

Printf, like main, is a function. You can tell by the parentheses that follow its name. Bewteen printf's parentheses are the characters "Hello, World\n". This string of characters (the double quotation marks are not included) is data that is passed to the function printf. Printf is a function that writes the data passed to it on the terminal screen.

Unlike languages like BASIC, the C function printf does not print a carriage return after the line. for example:

```
printf("Hi"); printf("There");
```

These two statements will not print:

```
Hi
There
```

But they will print:

```
HiThere
```

The sequence \n in the string is C notation for the newline character; therefore, our example will print a newline after the single line is executed. Notice that \n represents only a single character. An "escape sequence" like \n provides a general mechanism for representing hard-to-get or invisible "control characters." Among the others that C provides are \t for tab, \b for backspace, \" for the double quote, and \\ for the backslash itself. The semicolon following printf("Hello World\n") is the C statement terminator. Every C statement is terminated by a semicolon. Finally, the closing right brace (}) indicates the end of the statements in the function main.

C Names

There are some restrictions on variable and symbolic constant names. Names are made up of letters and digits; the first character must be a letter. The underscore "_" counts as a letter and is useful for improving the readability of long variable names. C treats upper and lower case characters different; so the two names:

test and TEST

are considered to be different. Only the first eight characters of a name are significant, although more may be used. You may not use a C keyword (we will introduce C keywords throughout the course) as a name. Since all C keywords are in lower case, it is possible to use a keyword by using upper case only (although this is considered to be bad programming practice and should not be done).

You should endevour to use descriptive names in your programs. These would be names whose purpose is self-explanitory. Programs are much easier to read when the data names have descriptive meanings.

Data Types

Unlike some other programming languages, like BASIC, C requires you to declare each variable before it is used in the program. C has only a few data types to work with but it allows almost infinite variety of combinations.

The following table lists all the simple C data types.

char
float
int
double
unsigned
pointer
long
short

Unsigned, long, and short are just different variations of the basic integer (int). The next table identifies the nature of each data type, and the minimum and maximum values.

char - a single byte representing an ASCII character in apostrophes, where the character >= -128 and <= 127.

int - an integer, where the value is >= -32768 and <= 32767.

unsigned int - an unsigned integer, where the value is >= 0 and <= 65535.

long int - an integer, where the value is >= -2147483648 and <= 2147483647.

short int - an integer, where the value range is the same as the basic int data type.

float - a floating point number, where the value is is >= 10E-39 and <= 10E38 with 6 digits of accuracy.

double - a floating point number, where the value range is the same as the float data type, with 14 digits of accuracy.

pointer - an unsigned int or a long capable of representing any memory address at which data may be stored.

Some differences exist in these specifications depending on the compiler you are using. The environment for which a program is written should be considered when determining what data can go into which variables and constants. Caution should always be applied to assignments between pointers and ints or longs. Depending on the compiler implementation, you may get unexpected results; always check the compiler documentation.

Exercises

After having your first lesson, you should be able to answer these questions correctly.

1. What is an escape sequence.

2. Identify which variable/constant name are valid:

a) tt12
b) 16st
c) long_variable
d) _sample
e) TEmp
f) say.what
g) test-variable
h) page/counter

3. What output will this program produce:

```
main() { /* Trace the output of this program

printf("This program demonstrates"); printf("an important point\n"); */ }
```

4. Specify the data type of the following:

a) 42690
b) 'b'
c) -1
d) 23.0
e) -128
f) 32

This lesson has covered the basic C environment, data name and variable rules, variable types, and intoducted you to C functions. In the next lesson, we will deal with arthmetic operators, relational operators, some more on functions (including printf), and Boolean logic.

Hope to see you next month.

Programs

KEYBOARD DEFINER
by F. Van Gilst, Atari User 12/86
Reprint from PAGE SIX Vol. 4, No. 11

This five line program lets you modify the keyboard definition table and adds five useful edit functions. Type in the program listing and SAVE it. Press RESET then RUN the program. Keyboard Definer only runs on the XL/XE series computers.

HOW TO USE IT

Run the program. Press the key that you wish to re-define. The program responds with the prompt, "GIVE CHARACTER". Now, type in the character you wish to store for the selected

key. The program sets up that key with the new character. For example, you could press SHIFT-SPACE and enter a semi-colon when prompted. Every time you press SHIFT-SPACE, you'll get a semi-colon on the screen. The program also adds five bonus screen editing functions:

CTRL-4 Moves the cursor to the top left of the screen.

CTRL-5 Moves the cursor to the lower left of the screen.

CTRL-6 Moves the cursor to the left of the current line.

CTRL-7 Moves the cursor to the right of the current line.

CTRL-8 Toggles the keyboard click either on or off.

You may also save your current re-defined keys by running DOS and saving an area of memory to a file by selecting the BINARY SAVE option ('K' in Atari Dos 2.0 and 2.5) and entering this command:

D:KEYDEF.BIN,600,6C9,600

To reload the newly defined table, just use the BINARY LOAD and enter the file name.

LINE BREAKDOWN

1: Contains the data for the program itself.
2: Poke's in the data and opens a channel to the keyboard.
3: Waits for a key to be pressed.
4: Inputs a replacement character.
5: Replaces the character with the new one one into the table.

PROGRAM LISTING

```
1 DATA 104,160,191,177,121,153,9,6,136,192,
  255,208,246,96,1697,142,1700,144,1702,
  143,1724,145,1726,137,169,9,133

2 FOR L=1738 to 1751:READ B:POKE L,B:NEXT L:
  X=USR(1738):OPEN #1,40,0"K:":FOR L=1 TO 5:
  READ A,B:NEXT L

3 A=PEEK(764):IF A=255 THEN 3

4 POKE 764,255:? "GIVE CHARACTER":GET #1,K:
  POKE 1545+A,K:POKE 764,255:GOTO 3+2*(K=155)

5 POKE 121,9:POKE 122,6:FOR L=1536 TO 1544:
  READ B:POKE L,B:NEXT L:CLOSE #1:END:DATA
  121,169,6,133,122,96.
```

BLOOM COUNTY by Berke Breathed (Copyright 1984)
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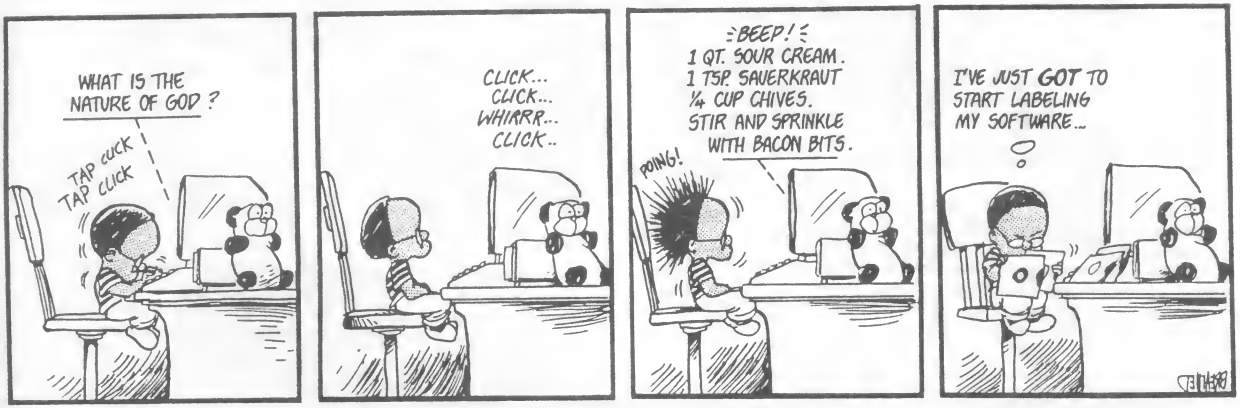
WHAT IS THE NATURE OF GOD ?
TAP CLICK TAP CLICK
CLICK... CLICK... WHIARR... CLICK..
:BEEP!:
1 QT. SOUR CREAM.
1 TSP. SAUERKRAUT
¼ CUP CHIVES.
STIR AND SPRINKLE WITH BACON BITS.
POING!
I'VE JUST GOT TO START LABELING MY SOFTWARE...

Last Hacks

Your Computer & Monsters..Uh..Kids
By Curtis Eddington
Reprinted from North Central Oklahoma
ATARI Users Group Newsletter

Summer time is always a slack time for any indoor activity, with the possible exception of afternoon naps. I have found, however, that the computer does serve a couple of purposes in those slow months, in fact, I find it almost indespensible. At this minute, my house is occupied by one of my son's more obnoxious friends. Were it not for the computer, I would probably be a resident of the local municipal jail. This computer has been in their capable hands for the last 3 hours, guaranteeing me at least some respite from their normal levels of mayhem and destruction. Research shows:

1 Kid: this is optimum. He will sit for hours, never moving from his chair. An adolecent would urinate on himself rather than stop in the middle of a video game.

2 Kids: this works well also... for around 1/2 an hour, or until one child shows a clear advantage over the other. At that point the disadvantaged player will attempt to equalize the contest in a progressive manner:

1) He will interfere with the other child's control of his joystick, such as bump the stick or mashing his fire button at the wrong time. If this doesn't stop the advantaged child, then:

2) Let child "1" get a sizable lead, then physically wrest his joystick from his hands, hand his joystick to the robbed player, and proceed to claim victory, usually in a very loud voice (this is the first clue that your computer is failing its job as a babysitter). If child "1" is not flustered by this and continues to claim victory, then:

3) At the optimum moment, reach over and unplug the good players joystick from the computer, insuring at least momentary advantage. This often leads to much yelling and crying and sometimes fist fights. If player one refuses to be panicked by this and still beats player 2, then:

4) Every time player 2 falls behind, he reaches over and restarts the game. Now, I would have thought that this particular item would fall much earlier in the list, since this is the one I employ when I'm outmatched (some people never grow up), but that is not the case. At this point, your computer has dismally failed its purpose, and you have a couple of arguing kids on your hands.

3 (or more) Kids: This will never work. Unless you own an 800, there are only 2 joystick ports on your machine, and there are few games that allow for more than 2 players. Fighting will immediately break out becuse the kids do NOT understand the concept of sharing for periods of longer than a few minutes. Non-players will begin to badger players to hurry and finish, and the final straw will be confusion over who's turn it is now. The one that will yell the loudest that it is HIS turn is the one who most recently completed his turn!

The most effective way of controlling children with your computer is the "deferred promise". You promise that they can play later: "Can we play some video games?" "No!! Well, maybe, but later, and only if you are really good." You can then use it for the rest of the day, if you are lucky and let the children play for 5 minutes right before bedtime. But let me warn you, the children will quietly gather around your feet, hovering near you like gnats, every few minutes saying "Now?".

Effective use of this babysitting resourse can be done by following a few simple rules.

1) Never let it get stale. If you see their attention begin to wander, run them off the machine and tell them they are playing it too much. Despite the fact that they were getting bored with it, those simple words will make using the computer the single most important thing in their lives!

2) Be ruthless! The minute you see an argument, dissention, verbal or physical abuse or even full contact warfare among the kids, tell them, "One more peep or problem outta you kids and I'm gonna set that $%&@!)# computer, AND YOU, on FIRE!"

3) Keep your promises. If you hear "one more peep or problem", then set 'em on fire! And, if you promise to let them play if they are good, and through some freak accident, like all of them passing out because of a toxic chemical spill, they ARE good, then be sure and let them play the computer.

Except for a few charred spots in the front yard where I can't get grass to grow, I have found these rules to be quite effective. And practice the "promise" concept this summer because this fall it could prove to be very valuable, transforming your babysitter into an educational tool: "Do well on your homework and I'll let you play the computer!"

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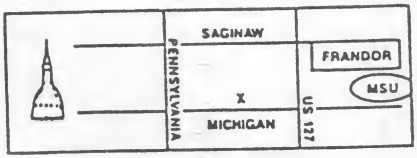

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G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) -- G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)

Atari News

-- and COMMENT,
Complied by John Nagy

ATARI STOCKWATCH: Hovering around the $14 mark, down a buck or so from a month ago. The company certainly seems to be making money. But are they making anything else?

BLITTERLESS MEGAS were seen being sold in SWEDEN. NEIL HARRIS confirmed this and stated that EUROPE continues to be a money pot for ATARI and thus particularly GERMANY and the surronding area gets special attention. At another in the popular ATARIFEST series, this one at TORONTO August 15th and 16th, ATARI announced that the MEGA WAS IN FACT SHIPPING to dealers in CANADA and the US. The first domestic machines will ALSO be BLITTERLESS, although the chip is to be sent later to all owners, to be popped into a ready and willing open socket.

MONO MONITOR BARGAIN: How about a ST mono monitor for $79? I read in ABACUS user group newsletter from SAN FRANCISCO that the FEDERATED streo chain has them at $79, regular price. From the prices I've seen, that almost is worth the airfare to go pick one up. Check it out!

On the games front: MINDSCAPE will publish "home computer" versions of ATARI ARCADE games such as PAPERBOY, GAUNTLET, ROAD RUNNER, and others.

It is important to remember that ATARI ARCADE GAMES and ATARI CORP are not really related... common criticism of ATARI for not having an ATARI computer version of ATARI MARBLE MADNESS while a Commodore version has been out for a year now overlooks this fact. However, her's a list of ATARI CORP game releases to come ("shortly"):

2600: Croosbow, Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Jr., Mouse Trap, Venture, QBERT, Kung Fu Master, Commando, Summer Games, Winter Games.

7800: Desert Falcon, Choplifter, Karateka, Touchdown Football, One-on-One Basketball, Sky Fox, Summer Games, Winter Games, Impossible Mission, Hat Trick.

XE GAME SYSTEM/8-bit Computer SUPER Carts: Hardball, Fight Night, Touchdown Football, One-on-One, Ballblazer, Rescue on Fractalus, Archon, Lode Runner, Blue Max, Midnight Magic, Croosbow, Food Fight, Battlezone, Star Raiders II, Flight Simulatore II, Missle Command, Blast 'Em. (Thanks NEIL HARRIS for the lists as announced at the Summer Consumer Electonics Show.)

ALAN REEVE made his mark with some nice PD and later Commercial handlers for the now cheap ATARI CX85 keypad. Alan also has some other products, and recently announced a complete development system for the 8-bit ATARI computers, still under development in his Chicago based company. DIAMOND will be a complete programming environment similar in operation to GEM on the ST. Although this has been tried by a few programmers before (RE: GOS, the ZOBIAN RAT, etc.), no equivalent to the C-64 GEOS has yet really arrived. DIAMOND may be the first. Designed to fully use the expanded memory ATARI (either the 130XE or any upgraded macnine), it will include windows and icons, alert boxes and mouse support addressable from any language or application software. Included are to be DIAMOND WRITE, DIAMOND DRAW, DIAMOND PUBLISH, and a plethora of desk accessories. Release date is a hazy "fall 87".

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M.A.M. this Month

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Inside MAM: THE CLUBS-	PAGE
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
G.A.G. (FLINT)	9
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	11
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	12
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	13
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	13
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	13

FEATURES:	
ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT	COVER
MORE ATARI NEWS	4
TORONTO ATARI SHOW REVIEWED	14
ST NOTES - PC:DITTO	15
REVIEW - MERCENARY (8-BIT)	17
TECH: ATARIWRITER+ DRIVERS	18
REVIEW - DIACK BASIC (ST)	19
INTERVIEW - HARD DRIVE USERS GROUP	19
TEN BEST 8-BIT PROGRAMS	21
LEARNING "C" - PART 2	23
PUTTING UP A BBS	26
REVIEW - REGENT WORD II (ST)	27
FUNSTUFF - ADS from the PAST	29
LAST HACKS - WILDERNESS COMPUTING	30

ADVERTISERS:	
CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS	2
MARS MERCHANDISING	4
SHUBERT CORPORATION	6
SUPRA CORPORATION	25
MEI/MICRO CENTER	31
COPY QUICK	BACK COVER

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Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

I am reminded that two issues ago, we marked the first anniversary of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE. I have been too busy to take note til just now...

When we began over a year ago (as MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE), we were small and innocent of the details of running a magazine... since then we grew to serve eight ATARI clubs in Michigan (and got plenty of requests for involvement from clubs outside the state too!). Then there were seven, and now... six.

The Washtenaw ATARI Users Group (WAUG) has begun their own small monthly newsletter, and they will no longer be part of MAM. Since they only charge $5 for renewals of a year's membership, WAUG's 40-plus membership was unwilling and unable to fund their part of MAM. We will miss them and the fine articles that they provided while part of MAM.

Meanwhile, I hope to continue to work for more inter-club communication, and who knows, Jackson's CACE, Detroit's MACE and MAGIC, as well as WAUG may all be involved with the remaining MAM clubs in some future publications... We may know more about those possibilities after the ATARI MAGIC SHOW in Detroit, going on as this issue of MAM is in the mail. Watch next month for complete reviews, pictures, and opinions of that event.

In other business, we will be trying to get MAM into your hands in the first week of each month. That means we need to mail by the 27th or so each month, and that means we need to be at the printers by the 22nd or so, and THAT means we NEED all the materials by the 17th or so! That gives us a few frazzled days to sort, chop, copy, hunt, retype, and stick it all together. So, since most clubs wanted MAM earlier, we will need your contributions earlier too. I realize that this squeezes a few clubs at the end of the month, but that's the cost of getting it out sooner. I hope this will work out.

Remember, MAM is YOUR magazine, no matter WHICH club you are in. Let us know what YOU want more, less, or none of! We can be anything you want us to be, but only if we know what you want!!!

Atari News

MORE COLLECTED BITS...By John Nagy

You read about the hot upcoming STAR TREK GAME for the ST in my column a few months back... well, it may NOT be forthcoming after all. Says STEVE DUNPHEY of the Rhode Island ACE club, SIMON and SHUSTER game division folks are incensed that beta copies got out and circulated in that cesspool of pirates called BBS's... so much so that they have threatended to pull the game entirely. Steve saw a copy and wrote about it, all very positive and eagerly awaiting the commercial release so he could have a copy, and his article was widely reprinted. Next, he was on the hot seat for "participating" in the piracy. Hey, he saw it and tried his best to help promote the company and the upcoming product. Lets hope that 1) The thing actually gets released and is as good as it looks, and 2) that pirates don't kill the marketplace. I commend Steve for not keeping nor passing a hot copy, and thank him for his consitant help in ATARI news gathering.

Herb Parsons, in his August '87 column for the NORTH TEXAS ATARI COMPUTER TEAM (NTACT), discussed some distasteful front-row piracy at their ATARIFEST. It seems that BEST ELECTRONICS sells a ROM cart for the ST that is "MAGIC SAC COMPATIBLE"... David Small, creator of the MAGIC SAC (a MACINTOSH EMULATOR cart and software), doesn't get one cent of the sales made by BEST of this blatently copied EPROM, as he stated in CURRENT NOTES magazine a few months back. David actually spoke at length with the BEST sales rep at the D.C. ATARIFEST. The rep went into great detail about how much money you could save by buying the BEST version instead of buying the "too expensive" REAL MAGIC-SAC... little knowing who he was talking to!

It appears from these reports that BEST is actually proud of ripping off the work of some of our BEST, er, sorry, most inventive programmers. Yet BEST continues to appear at ATARIFEST after ATARIFEST, and countless club newsletters carry their ads. ATARI stepped in and absolutely FORBADE the Pittsburg Atarifest from allowing BLACK PATCH SALES from having a booth, even though they wanted a lot of room and offered to pay all in advance. BLACK PATCH had angered too many buyer with "PAY NOW, DELIVER SOMEDAY" problems... and has since gone bankrupt. We should hope that ATARI would say SOMETHING about BEST... even though BEST has a fascinating collection of bizzare and hard-to-find ATARI miscellenity.

Personally, I don't need an ATARI belt buckle (or an ad for MAM!) so badly that I will support a company that steals from the rest of the industry.

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7) And a random drawing will occur for all participants involved for some goodies of our choice. Who knows, maybe you will win - but only if you enter.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

Summer's over now. Time to look ahead toward the things we need to do before another Michigan winter comes on - too early for most of us.

One of the things that also seems to occur as Fall begins is that people take an interest in their computers once again. As you begin to get computer-active, I hope you'll consider how you can help out yourself and your fellow Atarians by getting more involved in CHAOS. Our activities and support require the time and energy of many people. Needless to say, we can always use more help. If you are willing to volunteer, either for a specific job such as Publications Librarian, or just in general, call me and let me know of your willingness. Many of you will help if asked, but we are not sure who you are. So volunteer first!!

I am writing this fresh from a trip to Cedar Point. During the ride back I started thinking about how much the Tramiel Atari Corporation is

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like the Iron Dragon roller coaster, new this year. The initial climb upward was a matter of some trepidation as we climbed toward the unknown. The same was true when we viewed the Tramiel acquisition with both alarm and excitement. Then came the rush of new product announcements, like the initial hurdling of the coaster, until we were finally brought up short with the realization that many of the announced products were never to be. The continued dips and curves of the coaster, with the accompanying rushes of excitement and then disdain, remind me of how the Atari community now views the Tramiel Atari Corporation and its product announcements these days. At one point the Iron Dragon dips into mists that obscure your senses momentarily, not unlike the smokescreen of a good PR man like Neil Harris. When the ride was finally over, my son and I both felt that it was not what we expected, and yet we enjoyed it very much. We got a lot of value out of it. I am certain that when the mist finally clears and Atarians get off the coaster that is our relationship with Atari Corporation, we will look around and think, "Not what I expected, but worth it".

There has never been more value for your computer dollar than Atari, and that value, under the Tramiel's leadership, is better than ever.

Happy Computing.

8-BIT CHAOS MEETING
by Gary Ferris, Sec/Treas.

As the summer vacation draws to a close, the beaches should lose some of the competetive advantage they've held all summer. We expect attendance to rise dramatically as people get back in school and turn their attention back towards computing.

About 20 faithful 8-bitters showed up for the August 16 meeting. Although attendance has suffered, we still are holding steady in membership at about the 150 mark as opposed to many clubs which have reported declining memberships.

In the opening free for all discussion, the status of several announced but as yet unavailable products from Atari was discussed. Volunteers to staff the C.H.A.O.S. tables at the MAGIC Atarifest in Detroit were requested.

John Baker announced an exciting new service available from the C.H.A.O.S. software library. You can now rent the entire 8-bit or ST libraries for a month for $65 or both for $100/mo. With well over 200 2-sided 8-bit disks and an ST selection which is over 100 disks and growing in dramatic fashion, this can provide an inexpensive way to increase your personal library.

The August Disk of the Month was a rather unique one in that all the software on it was on German origin. There was a game wich was actually written to serve as an ad for a German toothpaste and a very nice graphics demo program.

Don't forget, coming up in October is the annual C.H.A.O.S. auction. members can bring any item they no longer need or want (need not be computer related) and sell them to other members. This allows you to get back some of your investment and possibly pick up some bargains in the process. The club gets a 10% commission which helps defray costs of providing services such as the BBS and software library.

AUGUST ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

CHAOS ST attendence has held up well through the slow summer months, with 18 people attending in August, the same as in July. Due to lack of an RF equipped 520, we were unable to use the overhead video. Seems that most of the regular participants have older 520's, without the RF, or have gone to the 1040. So we still have the need for volunteers to bring an RF 520 to meetings. But while we lacked some hardware, software was abundantly demonstrated.

I started with a demo and discussion of DBASIC from DTACK. This is a VERY DIFFERENT approach to marketing software. However, as a BASIC and alternative to Atari BASIC, it is fast, does not support GEM, and is too different to discuss in this short space. See the review of DBASIC elsewhere in this issue.

Sally Nagy then showed a "Disk of the Month", after she had put up descriptions of 6 new library disks on the blackboard! The DOM had utilities: A program to read ST disk

directories, then print labels for these disks, and a new version of EZSQUEZE. It had games: A very nice lunar lander, and a child's interactive ABC learning game. And it had a program to print calendars that have NEO pictures at the top and traditional date layouts at the bottom (make your own calendar). Is that a utility or a game?

BATTLEZONE was demo'd by Greg Gaskill, looking much like it's arcade counterpart but with more color. SCIZO, a very nice desk accessory for various housekeeping functions, like easily setting time, was shown.

FirstCADD, from Generic Software, generated a lot of interest when demo'd by Peter Miller. This low cost CAD program (CAD is Computer Aided Design) is a true CAD, not a drawing program like NEO or DEGAS. This means that lines are drawn by inputting coordinates through the keyboard, or "snapping" to exact points on a grid. It also has a very large "virtual window", that is normally worked on by "zooming" in closely on a small detailed area. No, FirstCADD does not do autodimensioning like the big CAD packages do. On the other hand, FirstCADD is priced under $50, instead of the big CAD's thousands.

After the formal part of the meeting, most members stayed for another hour, as usual talking in small groups about points of interest. I'll close with a minor First Word tip: Use control right arrow and control left arrow to move word by word through a document, instead of character by character.

ST LIBRARY
By Sally Nagy

Once again there is a new assortment of library disks available and some specials for all.

Three new game disks are available; on GAMES B7 you will find Hotshot.prg a new checkers game with different levels, a Cribbage game, and Newwheel - a wheel of fortune game with an editor. GAMES C4 has Pacman, Stone-Age Deluxe, and a playable demo of Timebandits. GAMES C5 features Joust, Lunar Lander, Panic, and Warzone.

Two new picture disks in Tiny format; PIC #13(featuring cartoon characters) and PIC #14.

New Utilities, UTILITIES B14 with programs and text supporting GFA BASIC. On UTILITIES C14 and C15 you will find a new Neochrome Picture calendar, ST_CAD, LABELJRB.PRG which offers many options, and many more. UTITILIES D11 has Micro GNU Emacs and Micro Emacs v3.9, two very different programs, one might be easier for you to use. UTILITIES D12 has Check balancer and Check printer programs, programs to compute loan payments and more. UTILITIES E5 has printer drivers and fonts for DEGAS, EZ Draw Art, and more...

A complete listing will be available at the next C.H.A.O.S. ST meeting.

AND NOW FOR SOME SPECIALS!

DBASIC and a limited amount of manuals are available for $15. (You can just get the disk for $5.00. First few people will get the manual for $10.00 the others will have to get it from the company for $42.00.) This Basic is FAST with some limitations. See the article in this issue of MAM.

BRING a BLANK DISK and ONE DOLLAR (and MORE) to the Meeting and you can get a copy of any of our DEMO disks. If you want several disks, it would be good to contact me before the meeting. What a great way to see what the ST can do and show it off to others.

Be prepared to also see a Disk Of the Month.

Until then Happy Computing....

News Flash -- It has been reported that there will be a number of new disks available for 8-bit users at their meeting in September. These include several Koala Pic disks with some neat pictures, some Gr9 and RLE picture disks, new game disks and new education disks.

THE C.H.A.O.S. DOWNLOAD
by John Nagy

Not much to say this month, as things have been so busy! Our BBS user base enlarges daily, with large percentages of calls being from out-of-state. While this does tie up the club line, it brings lots of new files and information to CHAOS members. So it works FOR you too. Remember, the best times to get through to the CHAOS BBS are the inconvenient ones... Sorry, that sounds awful. Try it this way: don't be surprized to find the line busy between 8-11 PM most nights. Try right around 6, or after midnight for a much clearer shot at GETTING CHAOTIC... at (517) 371-1106! (P.S.: The BLACKJACK dealer got CAUGHT CHEATING and was FIRED. Try it NOW!)

Eight is Enough

G.A.G. Disks for September.

Well, I'm back on the job! I'm feeling much better after my stay in the hospital, and with all the time on my hands I've finally been able to go through the piles of disks that I received over the past few months.

It's good to be out of that hospital, and out of the reach of that evil nurse, Erma Wolfgang. Have you ever wondered what hospitals do with dull needles? Nurse Wolfgang must get them wholesale. After the first day, she didn't give me shots, she took target practice! I wouldn't stay still long enough for her to take aim.

Here is a tip if you are planning a stay at the hospital. Don't piss off the day nurse! Espically if she is the one who will be taking out your Foley Catheter. Yeouch!!!

Anyway, here is a list of new GAG disks (all 22 of them!). My thanks to the MACE club in Detroit, CHAOS, SCAT, and PACE for some great disks.

Thanks to John Baker of CHAOS, we now have an almost complete collection of Analog and Antic disks. If you are looking for a particular program that was published in either of these publications, or want to get the source code, we now have it available!

We have added 5 new printshop icon disks to our collection. Disk 204 comes from Australia's MACE club. Dave Pettit also went through all the oddball disks I had laying around my desk and compiled them into disk #223. Disk 224 is actually all of the icons that were on two previous GAG disks (62 and 97), but are now together on a single disk in Printshop format. This will save some time if you wish to use it with the Printshop program. Disk 225 is a collection contributed by Faye Hanners. Disk 226 is a collection of icons/borders/fonts contributed by Dave Pettit. Thanks folks!

Disk 260 is a sound utility/demo program called POKEY PLAYER. It will allow you to compose music, and add it to your programs. The music will play at the same time the program is running. A nice feature to add to your games. There are sample programs also on the disks.

Disk 208 is a Public Domain Action Runtime program. You must own the Action cartridge/program to use this disk. You can now compile your action programs so they will run on any Atari computer, WITHOUT the Action cartridge. I haven't tested this program out, so I'm not sure how well it works. But it sure sounds interesting!

Also for the Action language people, Disk 209 contains an assortment of Action programs that I have accumulated over the past few months. Some are pretty handy, others are not that usefull, but if you study the coding you may pick up a programming trick or two.

Disk 210 contains a modified version of the Amis BBS program, called PK AMIS. This program requires the BASIC XE Cartridge and a 130xe Atari. It takes advantage of the additional memory for more features. Also, now that I'm on the subject, I will be putting out an updated version of AMISXM. This program was just uploaded to Compuserve, and is supposed to have many of the previous bugs cleaned out. I will have it available next month. If you need it sooner, let me know and I'll send you a copy.

Disk 212 contains an updated version of Atari's DOS 2.5, called 2.5P. This program adds many new features to DOS 2.5, and it is still 100% compatable. It is designed mainly for users of Happy-enhanced disk drives. You can add the underline or bracket characters "[]" in the filename. Other features include Fast Write, Fast-Buffered-Write with verify, which allows Ultra Speed SIO of the Happy. Also, there are three Ramdisk files for use with the XE, or XL computers. There are many other features also. I used this program, along with the COPYMATE sector copier, to make this months disks. It's the fastest copyier around! Also on this disk, you will find a TOS desktop program, much like that of the Atari ST computer. It uses the Joystick to move around an arrow, and seems to work pretty good.

Disk 213 is another modified DOS. This disk takes DOS 2.0s and modifies it to read double density. Unfortunately, it only reads/writes in double density so it will not be of much use to single density users. This disk is in double density format, so you must own a

compatable drive. I will package this disk along with Disk 212 (2 disks for 1), since Happy drive owners will have more use for this disk.

Disk 218 contains a program called MULTI-BOOT. This is a menu-maker type program with lots of features, but no docs. It has lots of utilities included, so it's worth a look.

Disk 221 is a program I picked up at a past AtariFest show. (The man just handed it to me and said to put it in our library!). It contains instructions on how to build a "parrot" type box that will record your voice, music, or whatever, and includes docs and sample files and programs. A nice project for you electronic buffs!

Disk 227 contains programs written in Turbo-Basic. TurboDB is an excellent data-base program with lots of features. Derby is a game that allows you to bet on the outcome of horse races. Bingo is a Bingo number caller, and it will even print out Bingo Cards. The card printout is a little bit blaah, and could use some work. But the programs works just fine.

Disk 228 contains some label making programs. No, the Cute Label program is not on this disk, but should be available at the next meeting, and in next month's library. (Jim promised me....yes, really!). PSLABEL is a cheap rip-off of Jim's program that was published in Antic. You can use printshop icons to make mailing labels, but lacks some of the nicer features. This version was modified by Jim Steinbrecker (MAGIC, Sector One) to save label data, and a few other nice features. UKLABEL is a demo of a commercial program. It is a fully working version, but you can only print out 1 label at a time. Then, you must re-do the entire label. LABEL is another label maker, with very few features. It does the job, and it also helps me to fill this disk! Also on this disk, you will find a neat utility program called FONTCOM. If you are using the Daisy-Dot program (in the GAG library), this program will convert ANY Atari font into Daisy-Dot format. There are several font files already in the GAG library, and I will have about 30 fonts on the Cute Label disk when it comes out.

Speaking of Daisy-Dot, I received an updated version of this program that fixes a few bugs. One of them prevented some of the Gemeni type printers from working correctly. Bring in your old disk for a free replacement.

OK, lets move on to games....Disk 205 has an assortment of games, including Hats, Typotime, Taxman, BaGpilot, Floyd, and Spookbst (a Ghostbuster type game).

Disk 207 is another asortment of games, including Crapols (dice game, Hats (a different game then the one on disk 205), Sharkey, Strkforce, Busquit,Castle, Olympic, Alien, and Dualist.

Disk 210 contains a great ski game. This game is similar to the ski game that Mattel sold with their Intellivision game machine. It has excellent graphics and requires a quick joystick hand.

And on to the demos...Disk 211 is a Movie Maker file from Australia called Atarimation. Another Australian Movie Maker disk, called Dragon Tail, is on Disk 219.

Disk 214 contains another collection of Computereyes pictures from the SCAT club.

Disk 215 is another SCAT disk. It is an animated demo that takes 5 koala pictures and animates them by using "Page Flipping" techniques.

Disk 216 is an AMS music disk, containing movie titles.

Disk 217 is a German demo disk that has been floating around many clubs around the U.S.. Some of the files are already on GAG disks, but many others are fantastic!

Disk #222 contains an AMP Music demo. As I understand it, this program was written for Atari several years ago to exibit at a show.

Well, that's enough for this month. And I still have another box full of programs to go through. I should have a bunch more next month.

As a final reminder, the 8-bit librarians job is up for election next month. I do not plan to run again. We will need somebody to take over the job, so how about it? Any volunteers?

See you at the meeting!
-Jerry

Genesee Atari Group is a non profit user group of Atari owners in the Flint, Michigan area. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut school, 2010 Crestbrook, Flint, MI. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm, all are welcome. Mailing address: GAG c/o Jim Steele 4711 Drummond Sq., Flint,MI 48504 (through Nov 87).
Next Meetings:
September 9,1987 6:30pm Neithercut
September 26,1987 10am National Computer Clinic
October 14,1987 6:30pm Neithercut (Officers election- IMPORTANT!)
October 24,1987 10am National Computer Clinic

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING:

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: September 12, 1987 October 10, 1987 *** *** OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley President 686-6796
Marty Schmidt Treasurer/Sec. 792-6029
Al Jennings 8-bit Disk lib. 790-1980
Joe Manelis ST Disk Lib. 790-0993
George Stuart News Letter Ed. 892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8- bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8- bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

Well, despite everything I tried (including feigning a terminal (hee hee) illness) I still managed to get elected for another term. If you notice a little different flavor to the newsletter, it's because we now have a Newsletter editor. Congratulations George Stuart! George will be handling everything except for ST Notes, the presidential address, and the ST portion of relics to relish. He's already saved me a lot of work, and it looks like he's doing a great job! His role becomes even more important, since I will no longer be attending the 8-bit portion of the meetings!

*** HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE! ***

The month of September brings IBM amongst us! "Hey, what's going on here," shouts the guy in the back, "I thought that this was an Atari club!!" Quite true, but the product is PC-Ditto and it allows ST owners to emulate an honest to goodness IBM PC. The program works VERY well, so be on hand and see LeRoy Valley put it through it's paces.

On the 8-bit side we'll have an adventure game called 222B Baker St. (Sherlock Holmes) by Datasoft. This is an 8-bit board game with up to four players. You have 30 different scenes and extra data disks are available.

*** RELICS TO RELISH ***

Competition was fierce as the elections drew near. But reason prevailed and no one slung any mud (well maybe one or two did) and when the final tally was taken every candidate had a sweeping victory. Actually its tough not to when you are the only candidate. Well TAG finally split-up with separate ST and 8-bit demos. I enjoyed this arrangement much better as I didn't have to sit through any boring ST demos. Just kidding, the ST is a great machine, I just don't need the power it offers. Why don't you come to the next meeting and give this long needed change a try. If you like it tell someone, if you don't tell someone.

LeRoy has an old Atari 800 given to TAG that should be ready for the next meeting. If you have some dusty stuff laying around that you don't want why not donate it to TAG.

Al Jennings demoed a public domain game called Dandy. Dandy is a 26 level dungeon adventure in which cooperation among players, rather than competition, is the key to success. You and up to three more players must get past denizens of

varying danger; you lose strength each time a monster rams you, and you must constantly stock up on food and then remember to replenish your strength by consuming food units when your health deteriorates. Should you lose all strength, you wind up in limbo, but another player can revive you by shooting an arrow into one of the many hearts scattered throughout the dungeon. Complete documentation is included with the bootable disk.

On the ST side of the curtain, LeRoy had the promised "HOT AUGUST BYTE" disk ready for distribution. The disk looked VERY professional, with a neat printed label and a double width title. The software included on the "HOT AUGUST BYTE" was:

DISCAT v1.3 -- A disk cataloging program that reads disk directories and prints out disk labels on several size labels. DCOPY v2.0 -- A DOS like utility that offers full file handling capabilities, the ability to format 82 track 10 sector Twister disks, and built in ARCing utilities. DLII -- A hard disk utility that reorganizes a hard drive to maximize performance. And boy does it work!! TURTLE v2.15 -- THE ultimate hard disk backup program. With this baby you can back up 5 MB in about 5 minutes! TWISTER 80 & 82 -- Twister formatter from STart magazine modified to fix several bugs and to support 82 track formatting. FLOPPYP -- Short program that makes folders look like disk drives. PRINTERS -- Desktop accessory that lets you configure your printer quickly and conveniently.

LeRoy demoed all of the above programs, and this disk was indeed HOT. All seven copies that he brought disappeared rather quickly, but don't worry, it'll be available in our library!

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine! ****** EBV ******

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Gerry Reno.....Monitor
Ted Beachamp.....Disk drive

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Tom Wheeler.....Monitor
Bryant Lafreniere...1040ST

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Next Meeting Sept. 10
At the Vo-Ed Building

Well summer is over and we are getting back in the swing again. Hope some people were able to get over to the Atari Magic Show.

As I mentioned last month, we will be demoing TURBO BASIC. This is a public domain language that will really speed up your programs. For the programer, it allows many new commands from the Atari BASICs. To demo TURBO's power we will be also demoing SUPER STATES a new version of the old Solid States program. Both will be featured as our disks of the month. We will be having a special this month Two disks for the price of our normal one DOM. Disk one is the double sided TURBO BASIC plus SUPER STATES. This is a B.C.A.U.G exclusive!

More about Super States. As I just mentioned it is a new version of Solid States. It comes with new 3-D images on the disk. This new version has many new features and runs faster then the old one. If you have an XL or XE computer you can run the compiled version which runs very fast. We will be talking about the state of the art in CAD (Computer Aided Design)including some new developments in the field.

B.C.A.U.G. OFFICERS

President	Chuck Steele	964-1701
Treasurer	Josephine Yeager	968-8401
Member/News	Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
Librarian	Todd Haris Dan Egan	962-2549
Secretary	Mike Engle	964-3033

*** UNCLASSIFIED AD: ***

FOR SALE: 1050 Disk drive with 1050 duplicator board installed. 1 year old. Also XM301 300 baud modem and Atari 1020 color printer/plotter with paper and spare pens. Numerous game disks and cartridges -- the whole bundle for $200. Contact Al Paquette in Bay City at (517) 684-9429.

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

G.R.A.S.S. is on summer break.

No Meeting in AUGUST, join us again in SEPTEMBER, when we resume meeting at the WYOMING LIBRARY, 3350 Michael S.W., on the first Wednesday of each month. The Informal meeting begins at 6:30 PM, with the formal meeting starting at 8 PM.

President: Ron Fargo
Treasurer; George Nosky
Secretary: Chuck Baughman

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST
SEPT 8 TOPIC ANNOUNCED IN SUMMER NEWSLETTER

NO MEETING IN AUGUST! Next meeting SEPTEMBER 8, at WINES SCHOOL unless otherwise notified. The "permanent" meeting place may be changed due to expenses and conveniece. Investigation of locations at Eastern Michigan University and the University of Michigan is in progress.

This is the LAST issue of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE of which W.A.U.G. will be a formal part. Our own monthly newsletter goes to all of our members, and MAM costs run higher than our low membership rate can cover. Separate subscriptions to MAM are available to any members that want to keep getting it. Correspond with any other club in MAM for details.

WAUG serves Southeastern Michigan in Ann Arbor and the nearby area. Memberships are $10 for 10 meetings (one year) and only $5 for renewals. Members get our newsletter and are able to buy 8-bit library disks for $2, ST disks for $5.

TREASURE CHEST BBS: 313-439-2816 (1200/300)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 39 W. Main #6, Milan, MI 48160

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

by Dan Youngs 616-388-3164

G.K.A.U.G. meets the 2nd saturday of each month. The Dues are $20.00 per year. We hold our meetings are Kalamazoo College Dewing Hall. The next meeting will be September 12th at 11:00.

Where did the summer go? It seems as though it was just spring and now its fall. Well thats O.K., we can now start our club meetings again. Some things that are important for you to know.

*We have not received our last 2 months of analog again. It seems as as though this happens to us every year! And I for one am getting sick of it! Why can't analog get our subscription right?

*The treasury has 137.39 in it but we still need to pay for 2 disk drives and we also have an analog subscription due. (We will not pay it until we get this lastest problem solved!)

*We the officers want to thank our regulars for all the support that they give us have given us this summer. A special thats to Dave Brynt for all the help on the BBS.

*There has been a lot of people calling me and wondering why we don't support the ST any better then we do. I'll tell you why, nobody wants to do any of the work. They seem to think that someone else should organize the ST club and do all the work for them to enjoy. Life does not work that way you must pay the price to get the enjoyment out. Enough said.

*The library will be at the next meeting. It really looks great.

*At our September meeting, Frank will talk about all the work he has put into upgrading his 1200XL. This has made it compatible with all other Atari 8bit computers.

*We will give a demo of our BBS and answer any questions that you may have on how to run it.

*We will also have a Demo for BBS anamator. You use this to make the introductory screen on our BBS. We need people to try and make a screen for us to use, so get your artist talent ready.

*Again, The next meeting will be September 12th at 11:00. Plan on being there!

Atari News

Toronto Atari Show
by Jerry Cross (GAG)

On August 15-16, Atari-Canada hosted a computer show in Toronto. Steve Mileski (GLASS) and myself went along as guests of Michtron to do some legwork for the Atari-Magic show, and got a first hand look at several new products, including the MEGA-ST.

This show was organized by Atari-Canada to give Canadian Atari dealers their first look at the new products. Invited to the show were such manufacturers as ICD, Michtron, SDI, Sierra, Abacuss, Data Pacific, Migraph, Regent, Supra, and the list goes on.

Most of the products shown have been reviewed in past MAM issues, but a few new products were announced.

Supra will soon release a new 2400 baud modem. Priced at only $189, it will feature 100% Hayes compatabliity, built in phone number memory for 8 numbers, plus many other features found on todays modems. It looks very much like the Hayes 1200 modem, but is about 2/3 the size. It's compact size makes it easy to carry around, and takes up little room on your desk. It's price is obviously the most impressive point, and Supra will include this in their usergroup discount plans.

Innagem announced their new product called Innagem Agenda +. Basically, this is just a software version of Deskcart, and I was not very impressed.

Antic was showing their CAD 3-D program, along with Cyberpaint and Animator. They were showing several fantastic demo's created with these programs, and promised to send me a disk with them on it. Thanks Antic!

ICD announced several new products for the ST. ST-Express is now being shipped (yeah!). They also will soon release several hardware products designed for hard disk do-it-yourselfer's, such as controllers, interfaces, cables, and more. Included is a new controller that is supposed to be much faster than the rest. Since I am not much of a hardware hacker, much of the details went over my head. Since the tech sheets were not available yet, I couldn't bring back much information, but more info will be available at the Magic show. Also announced was a new hard drive for the MEGA-ST. This drive is packaged in a stackable case that matches the drive/processor unit of the MEGA-ST. No price was announced.

Atari announced that the MEGA-ST will be shipped in a few days to Canadian dealers, and is now being shipped to American developers. The computers being shipped to developers will not include the Blitter chip, but Atari will send them later. They will be able to simply plug them into the pre-installed sockets. Atari also showed the laser printer, but had very little information about it. Although they did print out some samples, they did not have any desktop publishing software. The sample copies were sort of blah, but the printing was sharp. Atari also brought along their PC-Clone and Game machine.

Sierra introduced their new game called THEXDER. According to their flyer, Thexder is a unique, sophisticated arcade game. Players pilot an armored robot through multiple attack scenarios like battlefields, caves, cargo holds, and spaceship interiors. In Japan, Thexder is one of the best selling computer games of all time, with over one-half million units sold to date.

Hybrid Arts announced their Midi-Maze is finally complete and will be shipped by the time you read this. The first place they will sell it will be at the Magic show, where they are hosting another Midi-maze tournament. Data Pacific was on hand to show their new interface that allows Atari-ST drives to format and write Mac disks. This is necessary to support their Magic-Sac emulator cartridge.

Legend Software Systems introduced their new 16 track polyphonic Midi sequencer for the ST called The Final Cut. This program is billed as a simple yet powerfull program to use, record and edit 16 tracks of music, unlimited overdubs, special effects (echo, compress, transpose), and animated tape matching interface. The suggest price is $174.99.

Finally, Practical Solutions showed off their line of monitor interfaces. Monitor master is a switchbox that switches between an Atari Monochrome monitor and RGB or monochrome monitor, or even a VCR. This will save some playing around with cables if you switch monitors a lot. Also shown was an interface called VideoKey. This allows you to convert from RGB to compsite, and is designed specifically for ST's without RF modulators. You can tape the graphics off the ST and onto a VCR or view them on a composite monitor.

ST Notes
by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

There I was, sitting in the middle of a mass of humanity. The largest user group meeting that I'de ever attended. IBM users surrounding me on all sides. In the front a well dressed (three piece suit) man was calmly demoing some public domain software for the IBM's. As he finished showing off what he called "simply brilliant" software, he meticulously replaced the 5 1/4" disk in it's envelope, wiped his hands on a white linen towel, then said in a high nasal voice "If anybody would like a copy of this, please form in a single line. If you didn't bring your own disk, you can procure one from the club."

Lining up for my copy, I felt a teeny bit conspicuous. Everybody else had on three piece suits. Hell, their kids had on two piece suits! And here I was with my Charlie Daniels Band t-shirt, and my old faded blue jeans. As I stood in line, there was a very noticeable gap ahead of me and behind me. Kind of like I had the plague or something! Patiently awaiting my turn, I could hear a polite low buzz of conversation.

Finally it was my turn. Mr. Pinstripe handed me a 5 1/4" disk. As he turned to get another I said, "Excuse me, but I need a 3.5" disk." He slowly looked at my clothes and stammered, as if in awe, "Y-You own a System 2?"

"Heck no, I can't afford to buy one of those expensive toys." I replied. With a look of relief he came back "Well, I didn't think YOU could possibly own a System 2. Which clone do you own?"

"I don't have a clone. I've got an Atari ST." The polite buzz stopped abruptly, almost as if I said a dirty word. Everyone gathered around Mr. Pinstripe. "Do you even have any 3.5" copies of this?", I asked. Mr. Pinstripe patiently lectured me like a little child, "Just because you've got a 3.5" drive, doesn't mean that you can run ANY software available on 3.5" disks." Snickering he continued, "How could you ever think that you could run IBM," he thundered those three letters out, "on an A-Atari- hee-hee..." With that he broke up laughing.

Calmly I stood there and said, "I've got an emulator that allows me to run almost every IBM program ever written." If the room had become quiet as a library before, it now became a mortuary. With a shocked expression Mr. Pinstripe said in a nervous voice, "Well, that must have been an extremely expensive hardware add on!"

"Oh no," I replied cheerily, "It's a software program called PC- Ditto and it only costs about $85.00." "Oh, software," he scoffed, "then it must run abysmally slow." I could see that he was beginning to regain some of his shaken confidence.

"Actually, I can run at about 80% of the speed of a PC XT" as I watched him squirm I twisted the dagger in a little farther, "and I've still got 703K left on my 1040 ST after running the emulation program."

At this point something clicked in Mr. Pinstripes head...No really, I actually heard it! Looking at my attire once again he said rather sharply, "I've had enough of this nonsense. Everyone knows that you can't emulate an IBM on an Atari. Unless you can prove your claims, please leave."

"If I can prove it, will you get me a copy of your disk of the month on a 3.5" disk?", I asked. Shuffling his feet from side to side he replied, "Ok, I'll get your disk...But I've got to have absolute proof!"

Leaving the meeting I quickly ran to my car and brought in my trusty 1040 ST and color monitor. I heard muttering as I was setting it up, "Nice looking keyboard!...It's so compact...Only $900...It can't REALLY run IBM software...Can it?" Suppressing a grin I quickly booted up my system. As the normal GEM screen appeared on my monitor, I heard Mr. Pinstripe exclaim "Aha! You're mistaken, I can see that you might be able to run MacIntosh software what with all of those icons and windows, but you'll never run IBM software on that." Looking pointedly at him I said, "Well, it's true that I can also run MacIntosh software...but that's another story."

Inserting my PC Ditto disk I ran the PC Ditto program and then asked, "Anyone got a copy of IBM DOS 3.30? I'd hate to be accused of running a modified copy." From somewhere in the midst of the group a disk appeared. Slipping it into my drive, I pressed return and the drive began to whir. IBM users anxiously crowded around my machine to see what was going to happen. Suddenly the screen lit up with the familiar words 'IBM DOS 3.30 copywrite...' and a collective gasp filled the room. The ST had actually gotten the first hurdle!

Waving my hands towards the 1040 I said "Go ahead and run anything you want. It won't run IBM basic, but then again, neither will any of

the clones!" The first program tried was Flight Simulator II. If it could handle the graphics and sound of a great game like this, the IBM'ers knew that they were doomed. The plane took off fine and worked great. Next they followed with Lotus, Symphony, and DBase III +. All worked fine and performed as expected. Looking shell shocked, Mr. Pinstripe handed me 3.5" disk and mumbled something like "I still think that he modified the insides of that computer." Packing up my 1040 ST and monitor I headed for the door. Enroute I picked up a small entourage asking when our next ST meeting was, where could I order an ST from, etc. The IBM meeting was now in a shambles.

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What a scene! Don't you just wish that could really happen? But seriously, while the above story is entirely fiction, the product called PC Ditto by Avante Garde (904 221-2904) is definitely very REAL. It is a product that attempts to emulate an IBM PC (and does an excellent job!) and retails for $89.95. It is not copy protected, and runs great from a hard drive. PLEASE. Do not copy this program for any purpose other than to make backups for yourself!!

Let me start off by saying that when you purchase PC Ditto, it does not have "batteries included". You need some type of IBM PC DOS, like MS DOS or IBM DOS 2.0, 3.3, etc. Once you procure a DOS on a 3.5" disk, you're ready to enter the world of Big Blue.

The first thing that you will want to do with PC Ditto is to customize it for your own particular hardware setup. You do this by running a program called PCDMENU.PRG, supplied on you original disk. With this disk you can alter four characteristics of PC Ditto: DISK, VIDEO, KEYBOARD, and COLORS.

Under the disk option, you can specify drive A: as either an internal or external drive. This does not mean that the drive physically is an internal or external, but that you can call drive a A: or you can call drive b A:. This permits you to run software on an external 5.25" drive which requires drive A: to run properly...very well thought out. Here you can also specify whether drive B: is a 3.5" or 5.25" drive and whether or not you have a hard drive (although currently there is only support for one partition - more on that later).

The VIDEO option lets you select whether you have a monochrome or color screen (monochrome is still not currently supported, even though it appears on the menu!) and lets you set up various aspects for the monochrome screen. The KEYBOARD option lets you reconfigure your keyboard. The COLORS option lets you set up either four colors in medium rez or 16 colors in low rez. Once you are done configuring, PCDMENU.PRG actually modifies PC- DITTO.PRG.

After clicking on PC-DITTO.PRG the title screen comes up with information concerning available memory (703K on a 1 MB system and 384K on a 512K system), current default drive, and the video mode. At this point we place in our trusty IBM DOS disk and press return. Shortly, we'll be greeted with the standard message "IBM DOS X.XX copywrite...". At this point, your Atari ST is now an IBM. I have yet to find a program that won't run on it (other than IBM basica -- but GW Basic works, so who cares!).

At this point, there isn't much to review. The machine looks, feels, and operates like an IBM PC. Some programs (Lotus in particular) run very slowly, while others (DBase III+) run extremely fast (read Impressed here!). Please note that all programs that I have tried (about 50) are unmodified IBM programs!! Calculations in Lotus ran typically about 80% of the speed of an XT, but the problem isn't in number crunching, but in screen updating. It's so sllloooowwwww. I'll stick to VIP in this case.

Concerning hard drive support: IBM can only work with one partition at a time. This is not PC Ditto's fault, it is simply a limitation of DOS. To get around this Avante Garde wrote software to treat partitions as individual drives. Thus you have drives 0,1,2, and 3 for the four partitions C,D,E, and F. Currently they support 4 partitions, but there are some bugs in the support, and it doesn't seem to work for most people (me included). They are working on a fix (which will support up to 12 partitions), and the fix should be available by the time you read this. It is possible to set up a partition as a bootable DOS drive, and still have a bootable GEM drive. Once again, a well thought out extension!

Concerning 3.5" floppy support: IBM DOS (version 3.20 and lower) automatically assumes that your drive is a double sided 40 track disk. To set up your system to get a full 720K out of your double sided drive is quite a chore. The documentation is very unclear, and it's even worse if you want an 80 track single sided bootable disk! However, it is possible to do it (just look up how to create a CONFIG.SYS file your DOS manual, and look up DRIVER.SYS). A lot of help can be found on Genie, in the message base area (category 13 topic 28).

What more can I say? The product is great and does everything that it claims. It's well worth $90 if you want to run IBM software. Future enhancements include blitter support, mouse support, automatic time retrieval from the GEM system, and increased efficiency.

Review Eight

REVIEW: MERCENARY
SCI-FI Adventure Game for One Player
Released by Datasoft
Retail $34.95, often available at $19.95
Reviewed by JEFF BONE (C.H.A.O.S.)

With minimum effort your spaceship glides through the cosmos. While on auto pilot, you stretch your weary body and relax. Not a care in the world. Wait a minute... something's wrong. Your on-board computer indicates that vital ship systems are failing. A crash is imminent as the ship is directed to the closet planet. Brace yourself. Wham! You're alive. Immediately, the computer flashes pertinent information concerning the current situation. You've landed on the planet Targ. The planet is currently embroiled in a vicious civil war between the Pylars and the Mechanoids. Your ship is destroyed. Somehow, you've got to find a way to leave. But, it doesn't look like it will be soon. And it doesn't look like it will be easy...

In reviewing this game I must make a few things known. This is the first computer game I have purchased by Datasoft. I am not a big fan of Vector graphics. It also takes an extra-special role playing game to keep my attention. Of course, all of this sounds like it's adding up to a negative review. On the contrary! I am quickly becoming addicted to it. Here are the reasons why.

Upon opening the box you discover the game disk, instruction booklet and a "tourist information" pamphlet regarding Targ. Also, blueprints of the orbital complex circling Targ and all military installations are included. All of these are printed in attractive colors with excellent attention to detail.

O.K. let's learn how to play. Geez, this instruction booklet seems awful thin. That's because there are very few rules. But, this is one of the good points about the game. It allows you to begin play immediately. Most of the decisions you will be forced to make are yes or no questions. Therefore, you need press only one key to continue. Other situations require you to make an action with your joystick or press the fire button.

Once the game has begun you quickly find out why it's called Mercenary. Before long you meet members of both sides of the civil war. Each side offers you cash to perform services that will aid their case. But, which side should you work for? Which side is "good"? Indeed, the rules imply that there is no obvious correct side to work for. In fact, there are several ways of successfully leaving the planet. But, be warned. If you make a wrong decision you will have to pay the consequences. This is an example of another good point about this game. Flexibility.

This game also has a refreshing amount of creative thought behind it. It's filled with subtle hints of humor that break up the game. I will share a few of them with you. In one situation I was asked if I wanted to buy a spaceship at super cheap price. Aha! a chance to be illogical. Let's see if I can crash this game. I smugly pressed the "n" key. The screen flashed "are you crazy? This is a great price." I responded no again. "hello, is anybody out there?" was the reponse. I said no again. "would somebody please find me some intelligent life?" was the retort. By now I was smashing the "n" key with savage force. On and on it went. Finally, out of total exaustion I pressed the "y" key. I believe the computer's last response was something to the effect of "was your mother an amoeba?". On another occasion I came across a roadsign while scouting the the countryside in my hovercraft. The roadsign bore the dreaded Commodore logo. With deliberate aim, I gleefully pressed the fire button and blew the roadsign away. The screen flashed "good shooting!". Shortly thereafter I came upon a roadsign bearing the Atari logo. Once again the opportunity to act illogical overcame me. With a great deal of guilt I pressed the fire button. The roadsign exploded. "TRAITOR!" cried the computer. Within seconds I was attacked by three alien spaceships who mercilessly shot me down. 'Nuff said.

Other good points include the fact that you can never be killed. You can be set back or in other ways delayed. But, never anything too serious. Also, the Vector graphics are very sharp and seem appropriate for a sci-fi game of this nature. And best of all, any winning situation can be saved for starting the long awaited MERCENARY II.

Of course, this game is not for everybody. It will appeal to role playing gamers with a taste for sci-fi. But, I can honestly say that anybody with a sense of adventure will enjoy this game. Also, don't be fooled by the claim that this is a flight simulator (as the game box claims). The most difficult thing to master about flight in this game is learning how interpret the ship's compass. I don't consider this a flaw, it's just a little misleading.

On the software report card I give this game an "A".

Now, if I could just find out what to do with this irate Mechanoid I've just kidnapped...

Atari Technical

ATARIWRITER-PLUS PRINTER DRIVERS

	PRO-WRITER	NEC 8023	SG-10	PANASONIC KX-P1080	SMITH-COR D-100	EPSON FX-80	EPSON RX-80	LEGEND 1080	BMC-BX80	NX-10	MANN-TALLY CTI EPS. MX-80
Init. every line	Blank	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	27 85 0
Line Feed & C/R	155	*	*	*	*	*	10	*	*	13	141
Underline OFF	27 89	*	27 45 0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Underline ON	27 88	*	27 45 1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Backspace	8	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Elongate OFF	15	*	27 87 0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Elongate ON	14	*	27 87 1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bold OFF	27 34	*	27 70	*	*	*	27 72 27 70	27 72	*	27 70	27 72
Bold ON	27 33	*	27 69	*	*	*	27 71 27 69	27 71	*	27 69	27 71
UP 1/2 line (Super)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 106 10	27 83 0
DOWN 1/2 line (Sub)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 74 10	27 83 1
Down 1/2 line & C/R	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 74 10 13	-
Return W/O LF	13 .	155	*	*	*	*	-	13	*	-	141
Fonts (1 - 9):											
Pica	27 70	*	27 84 27 53 27 72 27 66 1	27 80	*	*	27 64	27 80	27 64	27 80	27 64
Elite	27 69	-	27 66 2	27 77	*	*	*	*	-	27 77	-
Compressed ON	27 81	*	27 66 3	15	*	*	*	27 33 4	15	27 15	27 69
Compressed OFF	-	-	-	18	*	*	-	-	146	18	-
Proportional ON	27 80	27 69	27 112 1	-	27 112 1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Proportional OFF	-	-	-	-	27 112 0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italics ON	-	-	27 52	*	*	*	*	27 82 19	27 52	*	*
Italics OFF	-	-	-	27 53	*	*	*	-	27 53	*	-
Near Letter Quality ON	-	-	27 66 4	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 120 1	-
Near Letter Quality OFF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 120 0	-
Superscripts ON	-	-	27 83 0	*	-	27 83 0	*	-	-	-	-
Subscripts ON	-	-	27 83 1	*	-	27 83 1	*	-	-	-	-
Scripts OFF	-	-	27 84	*	-	27 84	*	-	-	-	-
Underline ON	27 88	*	27 45 1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Underline OFF	27 89	*	27 45 0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Double Strike	-	-	27 71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 71
Reset to Default	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 64	-	-	-
Normal C.S. Select	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27 82 10	-	-	-

The above is a compilation of Printer Drivers for the Atariwriter+, published in various ATARI CLUB Newsletters during the last few months. Many thanks to:

Bill Lurie, LA-ACE - Prowriter, Legend 1080, and MMC-BX80.
Randy McSorley, PACUS - NEC 8023.
Bill Zinn, ABACUS - SG-10.
Greg Porter, PACUS - Panasonic KX-P1080, SMITH-COR D-100, and Epson FX-80.
Terry Watkins, HACKS - Epson RX-80.
Tom Neitzel, S=P=A=C=E - NX-10 (Dip Switch 1-8 should be OFF).
Marty Stickle, JACG - Mannesmann Tally, CTI, and Epson MX-80.

ST Review

DBASIC from DTACK

Review by Brian Goluska (C.H.A.O.S.)

This is a unique product with a unique marketing strategy. DTACK Grounded Inc. sent a master disk, many labels, and some manuals to the user's group, with the permission to distribute copies of the disk using the official labels. Apparently DTACK intends to make its wages from future sales of the manual - at $ 42.95 each, about the cost of a best selling game (although half to quarter the cost of other programming languages).

So what is DBASIC anyway? It's a super fast BASIC that doesn't support GEM or TOS. Read that sentence again, and let it sink in. Doesn't support GEM or TOS? Correct! DBASIC is its own system environment. It uses the 68000 processor and the huge ST memory as an empty box, for your DBASIC program to use as you will. No VDI or AES between DBASIC and the system.

At this point I have to say that people will either love or hate DBASIC very quickly. People judge languages based on their own frame of reference and goals. Some will pick a feature, love it, and love DBASIC. Others will miss a feature that they had under TOS, and throw DBASIC away without exploring any further. I can't summarize the entire package enough to tell you whether you will love it or leave it, but I can mention some points:

DBASIC is very fast compared to Atari ST BASIC. A graphics demo program that took 2 1/2 minutes using ST BASIC was under 11 seconds with DBASIC.

No mouse with DBASIC. That's right, and no joysticks either. Maybe a clever programmer could read the hardware directly, but most of us Basic programmers will be limited to keyboard input.

The DBASIC "screen editor" is much easier to use than ST BASIC's. Specifically, if you need to change a line, you arrow to it, make the change, and RETURN. You can also change the line number, and reuse the line, as you could on the Atari 800. In fact, the whole programming environment reminded me of the easier 800 environment, when compared to ST BASIC.

No easy TOS reading of DBASIC disks, or DBASIC reading of TOS disks. DBASIC uses its own disk system, which is faster and denser than TOS, but incompatible. TOS won't show DBASIC files. DBASIC won't read TOS directories. DBASIC will read sectors from TOS disks, but the programmer must write the code to interpret this, sector by sector.

This makes conversion of ST BASIC programs to DBASIC even harder. I've converted a few hundred lines, and most of the conversion has been easy (skipping the mouse and sound commands that DBASIC doesn't have). But gosh, I wish I didn't have to rekey the lines.

On the plus side for DBASIC, however, is its speed, its better handling of integer vs. floating point numbers, and especially its ease of learning/use. DBASIC is much more traditional than ST BASIC. If you know Basic on the 8-bit machine, you can pick up on DBASIC very easily. Learning ST BASIC, and the specialty calls of TOS/GEM, can be pretty rough for the home user. How much housekeeping code do you want to write before you can run your ST BASIC program?

In conclusion, I'll summarize my personal experience with DBASIC vs. ST BASIC: Wow, it's fast. Ouch, no mouse. Wow, it's fast enough that I can do a good job using arrow keys. Ouch, I can't load my ST BASIC programs, instead I need to rekey my program. Wow, it's simpler to program. Ouch, no fancy GEM stuff.

As with any programming language, the programmer must match the tools to the needs. I think that DBASIC may be the choice for certain types of work. If you want to be closer to the machine, and want to get more of the 68000's potential speed, you should consider DBASIC.

Report

INTERVIEW: Hard Drive User's Group
by Ron Kovacs
Reprinted from Z-Magazine

This is an interview with Chuck Leazott of the Hard Disk Users Group and the NETWORK: Atari BBS in San Antonio Texas. The interview was conducted on August 13, 1987.

RON: Good day Sir, Please tell our readers about the HDUG, and why you started this User Group?

MRZ: OK, (DEEP BREATH). HDUG (HARD DISK USER GROUP) IS DESIGNED AROUND SYSOPS THAT HAVE THE YEARNING TO OPERATE A HARD DRIVE WITH THE ATARI COMPUTERS.

IT'S REALLY FOR EVERYONE WISHING TO RUN A HD, BUT ARE AFRAID TO START DUE TO A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

WE STARTED THE GROUP AS A RESULT OF A CONVERSATION WITH TOM HARKER AT ICD. SINCE THEY ARE NOW SUPPORTING HD'S, WE NEEDED A PLACE TO COORDINATE ALL THE HD ACTIVITY. THUS, HDUG WAS BORN. I HAVE TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, AND IT WAS REALLY TOM'S IDEA. SINCE HE DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE TIME, I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO GOPHER IT.

RON: Were you running a BBS system before HDUG existed?

MRZ: YES, I HAD A SIMPLE SYSTEM (STARTED WITH AMIS, OF ALL THINGS).

AFTER TALKING TO TOM, I BOUGHT A HD.

I'VE BEEN INTO BBS'N SINCE 1982, AND STARTED WITH A SINGLE 1050 (AND "NO" RAMDISK). USING ATARI DOS 3.0 DIDN'T REALLY TICKLE ME.

RON: I know what you mean!!! What would a perspective HD user get out of joining this user group?

MRZ: WELL, IT DEPENDS ON A LOT OF THINGS. THE NEWSLETTER IDEA IS A DEVICE SETUP TO SPREAD NEWS ON HD SYSTEMS, AND THE HOW'S, WHERE'S, AND EVEN WHY'S OF USING A HARD DRIVE RATHER THAN A FLOPPY/RAMDISK COMBINATION.

YOU HAVE TO REALIZE THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE, YOU HAVE TO HAVE **$$$** TO GET THE HD, BUT IT DOESN'T HURT FOR TOO LONG.

RON: Sounds interesting, How about some membership instructions.

MRZ: SURE... WE CHOSE A VERY LOW COST FOR MEMBERSHIP. IT TAKES QUITE A BIT OF TIME TO GET THE DATA TOGETHER FOR THE NEWSLETTER (YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT PART), AND PRINTING COSTS ARE NO PICNIC. SO, $18 FOR A 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE NL SOUNDED REASONABLE. THE NL IS CURRENTLY A QUARTERLY, AND SEEMS TO BE GETTING OFF ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

FOLKS CAN JOIN HDUG BY WRITING TO:

NETWORK: HDUG
5831 SUN BAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX
78244
Voice: 512-662-9764
Modem: 512-662-9765 (ANY TIME/BAUD)

WE ASK THAT YOU PLEASE INCLUDE ANY DATA THAT YOU WISH TO HAVE INSERTED IN THE NL. THINGS LIKE LOCAL BBS'S AND USER GROUPS. ALSO, IF YOU HAVE A HARD DRIVE SETUP, WE WOULD REALLY LIKE TO KNOW WHAT COMPONENTS IT CONSISTS OF.

RON: Talking about componets, Do you include both 8 and 16-bit in your group?

MRZ: YES. IF YOU SUPPORT ATARI, WE SUPPORT YOU. ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT ATARI EQUIPMENT CAN HANDLE IN THE HARD DISK INDUSTRY WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT. ALL INPUTS COME FROM THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. IF YOU DON'T TELL US, WE DON'T KNOW.....YET.

RON: What other offers are available to members?

MRZ: OH, THERE ARE MANY DISCOUNTS ON PRODUCTS FROM LOTS OF FOLKS. ONCE WE ESTABLISH "RELATIONSHIPS" WITH COMPANIES, WE USUALLY CAN GET SOME FORM OF DISCOUNT ON HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE FOR THE HD SYSTEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE 2 NEW "BACKUP" UTILITIES DESIGNED TO HELP THE HARD CORE USERS BACKUP THEIR SYSTEMS TO FLOPPY AND HD.

FLASHBACK! AND HARDBACK (FROM ICD AND ORION MICRO SYSTEMS, RESPECTIVELY) ARE OFFERED TO MEMBERS WITH AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISCOUNT. ALSO, HARWARE IS OFFERD AT A DISCOUNT.

RON: I have read a few messages on the Zmag BBS about users looking for hard disk information and repair. Does your group assist with helping members or offering members repair information or a service?

MRZ: WELL, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE HARD DISK USER GROUP IS UNIQUE IN THE RESPECT THAT IT'S TOTALLY A "MAIL-ORDER" USER GROUP.

ANY CORRESPONDENCE IS ON MODEMS AND BBS'S THAT HELP SUPPORT US...LIKE YOUR SYSTEM. SO, WHEN A MEMBER HAS PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS, WE CAN LEAD THEM TO THE RIGHT PLACE (AND CHEAPEST) TO GET THE PROBLEM SOLVED.

SOME THINGS WE CAN HANDLE IN THE MESSAGE BASES BUT OTHERS, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE REFERED.

RON: What would you suggest (Hard Disks) for new hard disk buyers?

MRZ: HMMM...THAT'S TOUCHY, SINCE I DEAL WITH A LOT OF DIFFERENT PLACES AND DON'T LIKE PLAYING FAVORITES (EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SOME). BUT, LET'S SEE...ICD IS ONE COMPANY THAT WILL RESEARCH PROBLEMS WITH SYSTEMS THEY SELL, AND OTHER SYSTEMS THAT YOU HAVE. LURIE AND ASSOCIATES HANDLE THEIR NEW "BTL" HD SYSTEMS, AND OF COURSE THERE'S ALWAYS SEAGATE, INC., WHICH REALLY KNOWS THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF THE "THEORY" BEHIND HD SYSTEMS.

RON: Sounds like a lot of work for a new hard disk buyer.

I suppose you would suggest an MIO to your future HD buyers, are there any other interfaces available to Atari users?

MRZ: WELL, AGAIN...I HAVE MY FAVORITES, BUT THERE ARE NUMEROUS SYSTEMS TO USE. SUPRA HAS AN INTERFACE DESIGNED FOR BOTH ATARI 8/16 BIT

SYSTEMS. THE BTL IS USEFUL, AND IS QUITE SIMILAR TO ICD'S MIO INTERFACE. SINCE I HAVE AN MIO, I HAVE TO SAY THAT IT'S PERFECT FOR MY NEEDS.

I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE DRIVE SPEC CAPACITY IS ON THE OTHER COMPANIES' INTERFACES, BUT USING SPARTADOS AND THE MIO WILL ALLOW A PERSON TO RUN A WHOPPING 128 MEGABYTES ON A $59.95 8-BIT ATARI COMPUTER WITHOUT A BIT OF TROUBLE. I RUN 120 MEGS.

RON: Before we terminate this interview, what features are available on the Network Atari BBS and what are the future plans for HDUG?

MRZ: WELL, WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONFLICT HERE AT NETWORK... WE HAVE TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY, WHICH IS OUR BUSINESS, BUT TRYING TO FIND THE BEST BBS PROGRAM TO LET US USE ALL 120 MEGS ON-LINE IS A CHORE. CURRENTLY, LIKE YOURSELF, WE RUN THE OASIS BBS.

RON: (Last question)

Do you have information about ICD news for the months ahead, and expectations on the user group?

MRZ: WELL, I CAN SAY THAT AFTER SPEAKING WITH THE CREW AT ICD, THEY EXPECT TO RELEASE ALL THE NEW PRODUCTS IN A MAD RUSH. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT IT WILL BE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, BUT DON'T TAKE THAT WRONG. I ASKED TOM IF THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE XMAS RUSH, AND HE SORTA CHUCKLED AND SAID ABSOLUTELY NOT. ONE OF THE SLATED PRODUCTS, SPARTADOS 4 ELITE, HAS BEEN CANCELLED, BUT THEY WILL TAKE ALL THOSE FILES AND PROBABLY INCLUDE THEM INTO THE "TOOLS" DISK.

THIS SOUNDS TERRIFIC, AND I'VE SEEN SOME OF THOSE TOOLS IN ACTION AT THE ICD OFFICE. WE CAN EXPECT TO BE TREATED WITH AN ARMLOAD OF THINGS THAT WE'VE ALL BEEN PATIENTLY WAITING FOR.

AS FOR THE HARD DISK USER GROUP, I'M WORKING ON SOME "TOOLS" MYSELF, AND HAVE ENLISTED THE PROGRAMMING EFFORTS OF ONE OF THE "SLEEPER" PROGRAMMERS IN THE 8-BIT COMMUNITY. DON PEASLEY IS HIS NAME, AND YOU CAN ALL REST ASSURED THAT YOU'LL BE HEARING MANY EXCITING THINGS FROM HIM.

NOTE: TO ALL YOUR READERS... PLEASE DON'T CALL MY VOICE NUMBER AT 3AM THINKING IT'S THE BBS. HEH.

RON: Ok Chuck, I want to thank you for this interview. I hope we have covered a few of the important aspects and will be calling on you after the release of your next newsletter.

The Ten-Best P/D Programs
for the 8-Bit Atari
by Jerry Cross (G.A.G.)

Recently I have been reading articles in some Atari magazines that have listed the most popular Atari commercial programs. And just like with the movie reviews, I disagreed with most of them. So, I figured it was time I put out my own list.

Over the past two years, I have looked at hundreds of public domain programs. Some were just fantastic, and others (many, many others) were not worth the disk space. But there are a number of programs that realy stand out. These are the programs that should have been made commercial. But the author, in a brief fit of generousity, made public domain. These are the programs that sit in the "privilaged" area of my desk, since I always seem to reach for these programs.

This list is mostly for those people who just purchased an Atari. These are some of the most useful and fun programs available, and all are available from usergroups at next to nothing. These programs will put you on the right track until you can afford to purchase the exact programs you are looking for. It would also answer the often asked question "So what can you do with your computer anyway?"

1. TEXTPRO by Mike Collins and Ronnie Riche. Once upon a time, COMPUTE magazine published an excellant word processing program called SpeedScript. This program was a blessing to Atari users! At that time, there were very few good p/d word processors available, and you ended up purchasing one of the commercial packages like AtariWriter. Several months later, TEXTPRO was released. This program took up where SpeedScript left off. It added several powerful macro features, RS232 support, additional commands, and allowed the use of several Atari DOS's. You were no longer restricted to DOS 2.5! In addition, the complete package included detailed documentation, help screens, and several useful sample macro files. To date, this program fills all of my home wordprocessing needs. There are a few features missing, and it would be nice to see it support the additional memory of the 130XE's. But this program is just the thing for the average Atari user.

2. EXPRESS by Keith Ledbetter; actually, any EXPRESS program...well; actually, any program by Keith Ledbetter is powerful! EXPRESS is probably the most powerful, feature packed

terminal program for the Atari 8-bit computers. There are currently 3-versions (1030/XM301, 850 compatable, and MPP). Recent upgrades now feature text windows, R-time cartridge support, CRC-Xmodem downloading and lots more. EXPRESS's dialing menu offers an auto-calling feature that is extremely useful. Just mark the BBS's you want to call, and the program will call them, one at a time, until it comes across a BBS. No more constantly typing in numbers when a BBS is busy. There is simply not enough room here to describe all of the features. Still not impressed? Well, Atari has chosen this program to be included with their new 1200 baud modem, and Supra now packages Express with their modems equipped with a Supra interface. So, is there any doubt about adding this to the top-ten list?

3. PBS CHESS. This program features excellent graphics and gives you a fair competiter. Granted, this is not for the very-advanced Chess players, but it will play a good game. This is an excellent program for new players.

4. First Aid Tutorial. This is a sound/graphics demo-tutorial that teaches kids CPR. With the help of an Adult (to answer kids questions), this program is an excellent way to instruct children in the art of giving life-supporting first aid in case of emergency. I let my brother borrow this program for his cub-scout pack, and it was a big hit! This program was originally a commercial program, but was released into the public domain. The graphics are excellent!

5. Turbo-Basic. This program comes all the way from Germany. It is a complete package that includes the Turbo-language, Compiler, sample programs, and complete documentation. Programs written in Turbo, then compressed, are extremely fast. Additional commands give you better graphic control, and far more power then Atari Basic. A must have for beginner programmers!

6. Action P/D Runtime Package. This program is just now making an impact in the Atari community. Many older Atari users purchased the Action language from OSS, but until now were unable to share their programs with other users. It was necessary to purchase the Action cartridge in order to run other Action programs. The only alternative was to buy a Runtime package from OSS (not cheap!). But now, there is a public domain version. By using this package, you can compile the Action program into a binary load program that will run on any Atari computer. This should open up a flood of great new public domain programs.

7. LaserType. This program is an educational/game program. The object is to shoot down falling "letters" before they touch the ground. By hitting the matching letter on the keyboard, you activate a laser that shoots away the attackers. Sounds boring, huh? Well, add some great music background, excellent graphics, and several difficulty levels, and you now have a great typing practice program. Lets face it, if you want to learn to type fast and accurate, the only way is to practice. At least now it's not so boring.

8. CESDEMO. This may not be your idea of a must have program, but every time I see this graphic demo I'm amazed. This program was shown a few years ago at the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicage. Atari used this program to "draw" people into their booth. (It worked!).

9. Dandy. OK, this is for you game players. This is a multi-level maze game. The idea is to search each level for a "key" that will open a door to the next level. But you must fight your way through a varity of monsters. You will need a quick joystick hand and lot of practice.

10. Sideprint/Koala pictures. One of the first things I did when I purchased a printer was try out some picture dumps. With a little creativity, you can make great signs, posters, greating cards, or whatever. But I, like a lot of other people, can't even draw a straight line. So, I began collecting Koala pictures. These are pictures drawn using various graphic painting programs, and either a joystick or a graphics tablet. There are many commercial programs that use these pictures, and I have had lots of fun dumping pictures in every size and shape. Sideprint is one of the better picture dump programs available in p/d.

One more program I want to add, but that doesn't quite make the "Top 10" is SpeedCalc. This is a spreadsheat program published by Compute. Lets face it, if you are looking for a computer to do spreadsheets, the 8-bit Atari falls short of the mark. You simply do not have the memory, and the 40 column display makes it extremely difficult to produce a good spreadsheet. But if you don't mind the limitations, SpeedCalc will do just fine. It has many of the features you will need, and is very fast!

OK, now it's your turn. I just know you are saying "what a jerky list!". So, send in your own list. We'll be glad to make you a PD critic!

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SUMMER'S OVER - COME TO THE MEETINGS!

Programming

C Language Course
Lesson 2
by "r.s.", who I hope will soon upload Lesson 4 and also tell us who he/she is!

In the first lesson, we basically explained some fundamental C concepts. We talked about the nature of compiled languages, the C environment, the preprocessor, constant and variable data names, the various C data types, and described a very simple one line C program.

I hope you have taken the time to become familiar with your compiler, linker, and shell (if you have one), and have compiled some sample programs (including the short one in the last lesson). In this lesson we will focus a little less on theory, and more on practical C programming experience.

Because of the extra operating systems in the ST (eg: GEMDOS, VDI, AES, BIOS, XBIOS), C programming on this machine can be quite different than described in a normal C textbook. There are approximately 250-300 extra functions that have been added to the C library to support the more involved (complex) nature of TOS. Most of these functions are involved with graphics and windowing concepts.

We will get to these advanced features when both you and I are satisfied that you can effectively program, and understand all of the language. For now, you should link your programs so they are TOS applications. This means that they will be using the text oriented environment, and will not be making use of special GEM graphics and windowing techniques.

We will also be using a special #include file for all these examples. Its name is stdio.h, which stands for standard input/output header file. Most C compilers have this file as part of their standard library. If your compiler does not have a file by this name, look in your compiler documentation for the standard I/O header file name.

More On Printf

Since printf is perhaps the most commonly used function in the ST text environment, most of this lesson will be dedicated to it and the declaration of variables and constants.

The general form of the printf function is:

```
printf("format string", argument1, argument2,...);
```

Where "format string" represents literals, numeric constants, and special format symbols (conversion specifiers), and "argument" represents the variables, constants, and expressions to be printed.

Printing Integers with Printf

The following conversion specifications can be given to print an integer using printf:

```
%d  in signed decimal notation
%o  in octal notation
%x  in hexadecimal notation
```

Lets try a simple example:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
   int sample1, sample2, sample3;

   sample1 = 255;
   sample2 = 32744;
   sample3 = 1970;

   /* print in decimal */
   printf("Sample1 in decimal=%d\n", sample1);
   printf("Sample2 in decimal=%d\n", sample2);
   printf("Sample3 in decimal=%d\n", sample3);

   /* print in octal */
   printf("Sample1 in octal=%o\n", sample1);
   printf("Sample2 in octal=%o\n", sample2);
   printf("Sample3 in octal=%o\n", sample3);

   /* print in hex */
   printf("Sample1 in hex=%x\n", sample1);
   printf("Sample2 in hex=%x\n", sample2);
   printf("Sample3 in hex=%x\n", sample3);
}
```

You should examine the program carefully, and understand how the conversion specifiers are used because they are the core of the printf function.

Can you see how easy it would be to write a number base conversion program that used decimal, octal, and hexadecimal? Latter on when we introduce keyboard input functions, we will write just a program.

This program could also be written a slightly different way using preprocessor constants, like this:

```
#include <stdio.h>
#define HEX 0xFF
#define DEC 32744
#define OCT 016
#define LONG 70000L
```

```
main()
{
    /* using printf with the preprocessor */
    printf("Hex number in decimal %d\n", HEX);
    printf("Decimal number in octal %o\n",
DEC);
    printf("Octal number in hex %x\n", OCT);
    printf("A long decimal %ld\n", LONG);
}
```

As you can see, there are many ways to represent an integer in C. Some of the notation used in the above example requires explanation. A constant in C has special notation depending on the number base you are using. The general form is like this:

1024 A normal decimal constant
0216 An octal constant (octal because of the leading zero)
0xff A hexadecimal constant (because of the leading "0x")
2233L A long constant (because of the trailing "L")

Some pretty weird things will happen if you specify a numeric constant that is not in the range of the specific number base. Remember that octal numbers only go from zero to seven, hexadecimal numbers are from zero to the character F, etc.

Since integers can only be within a certain range (see lesson one for integer ranges), a special form of an integer is used to represent numbers outside the normal integer range. Its is called a long. It can be defined on the ST by using the keyword "long," or in a constant by putting the character "L" after the number. The lower case "l" can legally be used, but the upper case letter is much easier to distinguish from the number one.

Notice that in the example above, the value of the long is not really outside the normal integer range. I have used this notation to demonstrate that a number may be forced to a long using this method.

The last printf function call also shows you how to print a long. The conversion specifiers "%lo" and "%lx" are also valid for printing long octal numbers and long hex numbers respectively.

Printing Floats With Printf

A float is a rational number having a whole part and a fractional part. Refer to lesson one for the precision of a floating point number. Since floats use more memory space and take longer to calculate, they should be used sparingly. As a matter of fact, in all the C programs I have written, I have never used a float.

Consider the following program:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    /* using printf to print floats */
    float sample1, sample2;

    sample1 = 25.667;
    sample2 = -625.799;

    printf("First float=%f\n", sample1);
    printf("Second %%f=%f\n", sample2);
}
```

By now this example should be a little obvious to you. The only thing different is the two percent signs in the second printf statement. This is the way you can print the percent sign itself without confusing the printf function. The backslash can also be used in this manner (eg: \\).

Printing Characters and Strings With Printf

In C, a character variable or constant (char), can store one ASCII character. Here is an example:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    char ch1, ch2, ch3, ch4;

    ch1 = 'H';
    ch2 = 'e';
    ch3 = 'l';
    ch4 = 'o';

    printf(%c%c%c%c%c\n", ch1, ch2, ch3, ch3,
ch4);
}
```

This little program will print "Hello" on the screen. A character in C is enclosed in apostrophes. An escape sequence can be used to represent non-printable control characters, like this:

```
ch1 = '\n';
```

This would assign the variable "ch1" to the ASCII newline character. Since a character (on the lower level) has an ASCII code, you can assign a character variable with an integer constant. Make certain that the value of the assignment is within the byte range of an ASCII character (0-255). At this point, I suggest that you purchase a book with an ASCII table for the ST so you can familiarize yourself with the ST character codes.

Here is the same program again, only using ASCII code assignments:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
   char ch1, ch2, ch3, ch4;

   ch1 = 72;
   ch2 = 101;
   ch3 = 108;
   ch4 = 111;

   printf("%c%c%c%c%c\n", ch1, ch2, ch3, ch3,
ch4);
}
```

A string in C is nothing more than a series (array) of characters ending with a null marker. The null marker is standard in C and must be present in order to do any printing or string manipulation. If you initialize the data name as an array of characters (a string), the null is appended to the array automatically; therefore, you must declare one extra byte in your array to have enough room for the null marker. Also, all arrays in C start from element zero not one. Here is a string example:

```
#include <stdio.h>

char string[] = "This is a demonstration
string";

main()
{
   printf(%s\n", string);
}
```

As you can see, strings are printed with a "%s" conversion specifier. Notice the square brackets just after the name "string." These indicate that "string" is an array. Normally, there is a number inside these brackets to indicate how many elements there are in the array. By initializing the array automatically, the compiler does the counting and we need not concern ourselves with the actual element count.

There is a catch, however, and that is the reason why the array is set up outside of the main function. In a future lesson we will go into the scope, class, and lifetime of a variable and the reason will become clear.

Exercise Time

If this statement were part of a program, what would it print?

```
printf("%c%c%c\n", 'H', 105, '\41');
```

Next month: Arithmetic, Relational Operators and Logical Operators!

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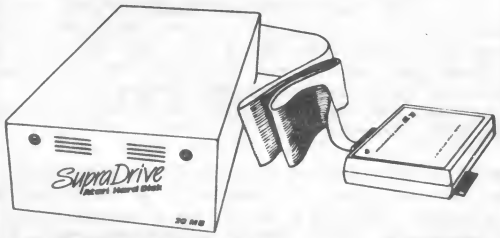

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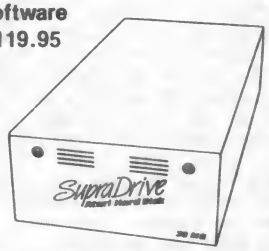

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Viewpoint

Putting Up A Bulletin Board System
The 5 W's
by Randy Pearson (C.H.A.O.S.)

I've been running a BBS for two years come November, so I've seen many boards come and go. I have found a pattern to explain the demise of many of them, and since I have nothing better, presently, to write about, I thought I'd enlighten you on the five W's of starting a BBS. (Even if you never plan on putting one up, this should, I hope, amuse you.) I'll start at the beginning. Nah, I'll start at the middle, and work my way around. I don't like taking the easy way out.

WHAT do you need to start a board? Well, first the basics. A computer, a modem, some form of storage (disk drive), and a phone line are needed. Without any of those, lets face it, your board won't go anywhere. But you may think that you would need an IBM with a 20 meg hard drive or a mainframe to run a BBS. No, of course not, silly. Many boards are run on Commodore 64s and Ataris, and I've even called TI-994A, TRS-80 model 1, and CoCo boards in the past. You also don't need a hard drive to run a decent board. I started on 2 Atari floppies, and I've seen successful boards run on one Commodore drive. Of course, if you plan on running a download board, or want many files and a large message base, you will be laughed off the phone lines without the proper storage. Once again, a modem is a modem. Unless you have something like an Atari 835, which doesn't auto answer, any modem will do. (Well, you COULD run a BBS with an acoustic modem, but I hope you either like sitting next to your phone all day, or you have kids which you can pay/force to do this.) I'll talk more about the phone line later.

There are other pieces of equipment that, if you want to be a HIGHLY RESPECTED SysOp, you should consider. A biggee is having a second computer system. The main reason for this is so that you won't be taking your board down every so often to write a story, or play Joust. You can go all out, and get a complete second system, with modem and disk drive. This I suggest. In my case, I let my ST run the board, and I use my 64k 600XL system to write, (this very article, as a matter of fact), play Joust, and modemize. You don't need to start right out with two systems. I slowly built mine up, using my 400 as system number 2 after I procured an 800 for the BBS.

WHAT else do you need? Well, once you convince your computer to agree to being left on all the time, the next step is finding some BBS software. Now, if you have an Atari, or any other 'normal' computer, finding software is not difficult. Finding software you actually LIKE may be another problem entirely. My suggestion is to look around. DON'T just grab the first thing you see. For Atari alone, there are many public domain programs (AMIS, FoReM) and many other commercially available (Express, Karnia, Nite Lite, Carnival, BBCS). Find people who know these programs, and call boards that run it. Everybody wants something different out of their system. Me, I wanted a menu driven system (menus to tell you what you can do, then when you see what you want, you hit the corresponding letter and it stops the menu and executes your command) so I picked BBCS, the Bulletin Board Construction Set.

And that taught me another valuable lesson. Call some boards that run the software you want, and ask them how they like it! See if it crashes a lot, has annoying bugs, etc. SysOps are the best people to ask, since they, unlike authors and companies, have no reason to lie and exaggerate! (And by the way, get a legal copy of the program. Support is SO nice! Nite Lite has a support BBS, for SysOps only, and so do others.)

One final thought on the 'what' aspect. If you want to be at all respected as a BBS SysOp, there are things you should consider. The biggest is the buying of a separate line. If you can't afford a separate line, don't bother. You can run a successful part time board off of your voice line, but it will be SO much hassle! People will call at ALL hours, no matter what time you set as BBS time. And the inverse, you'll flip out Aunt Martha when she calls you, only to get a weird beeping. Besides, people look down on part time boards. I do. Also, many will look down on you if you only run at 300 baud. I don't, however, and if you only have 300, don't rush out and buy 1200. Many good boards run 300 only. But if you plan on carrying downloads, or are in the boonies, and plan on being only 300, you better be REALLY worth it!

WHEN should you run a board? Sounds like a stupid question, but really it is something to consider. Should a SysOp be a certain age? Of course not, silly. NEVER underestimate a young SysOp! They are usually the most inventive. So the 'WHEN' is not about age. The question is, how long after you get your modem should you consider running a board? That's not easily answered, since everybody is different. But I can almost guarantee you that at least half of new BBSs that die within their first couple months were run by kids (oops, there I go, stereotyping....) who put up a board after

calling their first one. There is so much more to running a board than just supplying the computer! And to find out all these little idiosyncrasies, one really must be IN the BBS community for a while. I called boards for well over a year before I became a SysOp. And even then, I did not jump straight in. I was a Co-SysOp on Benchboard for a number of months, and that helped me so much! But by calling around first, you can see how different people run boards, and it will help you to figure out just what you want out of yours! You will meet the people of the modem world, and make many friends while doing so. Most BBS people act similarily when they see an ad for a new BBS, when the SysOp is unfamiliar. They moan, and say, "Oh, who does he think HE is?!" (And, I hate to say it, but it seems that the most boring, lifeless boards were run by a person who had only had a modem for a week before deciding to take the plunge.)

Ok, now for the 'Who.' Whoops, I just answered that. S'ok, never mind, then. But let me just add that you will find that the best boards are almost always run by people who KNEW what they wanted to make their BBS into, before they went ahead with it.

Where....Where should a person run a BBS? Ok, another stupid one, but let's think about this one. It doesn't really matter where you live, but if you live in a small town that is many miles away from the bigger cities, and is thus long distance, people won't call you unless you are REALLY worth it. So, if you live off in the boonies, it may very well be a consideration NOT to run a board.

The last question is WHY. Why do you even want to run a board? I'll bet you non-SysOps out there think it's so bloody easy, don't you? Well, I got news for ya. It's not all beer and Skittles. (Whatever that means.) Ask any SysOp. There are many aspects to running a board, and it will keep you busy. I won't go into what all we do now, but look for another article from me later, if you care. Matter of fact, DO ask a SysOp or two what it's like. They will more than likely stutter, and give you a useless answer, but you may get some info out of them. But being a SysOp, be prepared for ANYTHING! Because you will get just that. But it makes for some fun!

So, I hope this helped. Good luck, you future Compuserve you!

ST Review

ST Review: Regent Word II
by John Johnson (C.H.A.O.S.)

Regent Word II is the upgraded version of Regent Word, a word processor which was released two years ago by Regent Software.

Regent Word II is a solid, well written program that stacks up well against other word processors currently available for the ST. This program offers block editing functions; search and replace functions; style features: bold/underline/italic/super- and sub- scripts; rulers and formatting. Regent Word II also offers advanced features such as word count, a 30,000 word expandable spelling checker, and a program to create printer drivers. Regent Word II is run entirely in the GEM environment and can be used with other Regent software such as Regent Base and Mail Merge Database.

I guess this is where I can begin to editorialize. The first thing I would recommend to a new Regent Word II owner is to quickly delete the DESKTOP.INF file that comes with on the disk and replace it with one of your favorites. The program comes up in red and blue, which, while being very patriotic, doesn't do much for your eyesight.

Regent Word II is set up to use rulers to set the margins, line spacing, font style and page breaks. This is graphically a nice feature. Regent Word II also allows you to use as many rulers as you see fit. Using rulers to set page breaks seems to be a clumsy an inefficient use of the GEM operating system. It would be nice to be able to just take the mouse and click where you want a page break, instead you must go up to the menu bar, choose INSERT RULER, and then ask for a page break. Too many steps for me. This is the general impression I get from this program, however. GEM is set up to allow you to use a mouse, but evidently the people who wrote this program only know how to use menu bars. An ideal word processor program should allow you to use the mouse, menu bar and control sequences. The mouse can be used to position the cursor in Regent Word II, but cannot be dragged to identify a block, as in better word processors (although F6 and F7 can be used to mark blocks). It would be nice to allow you to enter a control sequence or a function key instead of going to the menu for repetitive tasks.

Two good features are word count and spell. Word count is a menu driven feature that counts the number of words in your document, and is

something that I am surprised has not been incorporated in more word processors. Spell is a menu driven and expandable spelling checker. Spell allows you to spell check your entire document and add words to the dictionary that it doesn't know (up to 100,000 words). This feature would be more useful if you could use it on individual words as well, instead of having to check the whole document. Also, spell cannot be set to continuously check your spelling as you type, this is a rather large oversight.

Another unique feature that I particularly like is ALPHABETIZE. This will take and alphabetize your file; although, I found no way to just alphabetize a paragraph. In order to test Regent Word II I decided to be nasty and loaded in a dictionary (Webster's: 25,121 words) that I had previously typed in by hand last summer (O.K., so I was bored....). Regent Word II took only about half a minute to load this 233K file, and about 5 seconds to word count. But, and here was the real test, when I asked it to alphabetize the file it went into a coma. Six hours later I could not tell that any progress had been made and I cold booted the system to try again. I must have over stressed the program. Regent Word II did a good job of alphabetizing smaller files, but I have written BASIC programs (in ST BASIC) that ran quicker. I tried to spell check the document but after ZAMBIAN, ZECH, and a few other z-words weren't found I changed my mind. I was surprised, however, to find that the on-line dictionary is one of the few to include some of the more colorful phrases that may be found on word processors of the 80's.

Regent Word II allows you to set up to 10 special fonts. This feature can only be implemented if your printer can print alternate font sets. If you want to implement these special fonts you need to run PRINTER.PRG and create yourself a printer driver. This is not hard, if you know the control sequences to send to your printer. And, if you cannot get your printer driver to work Regent Software will, for $10. These should be available in the manual that came with your printer. Although Regent Word II is a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) word processor, these fonts will not show up on the screen. You will not easily forget where you use special fonts, since you must use a new ruler each time you change fonts. This is also a problem because it doesn't allow you to change fonts (as far as I could tell) within a line.

The styling features are pretty much the necessary ones: italic, underline, bold, and sub/superscript. These show up on the screen, however the underline feature will only underline text; this means you cannot type titles, etc., because unwanted blanks show up.

Also, along the lines of styling, Regent Word II allows single, 1 1/2, double and triple spacing; this is a feature that many word processors tend to leave out.

Warning, if you don't have a printer hooked up to your computer, don't hit PRINT DOCUMENT! You will be forced to reboot, even if you choose 0 pages (I tried this). However, Regent Word II does come with a good assortment of printers to choose from (18 styles) and allows you to easily build new printer drivers if yours isn't listed.

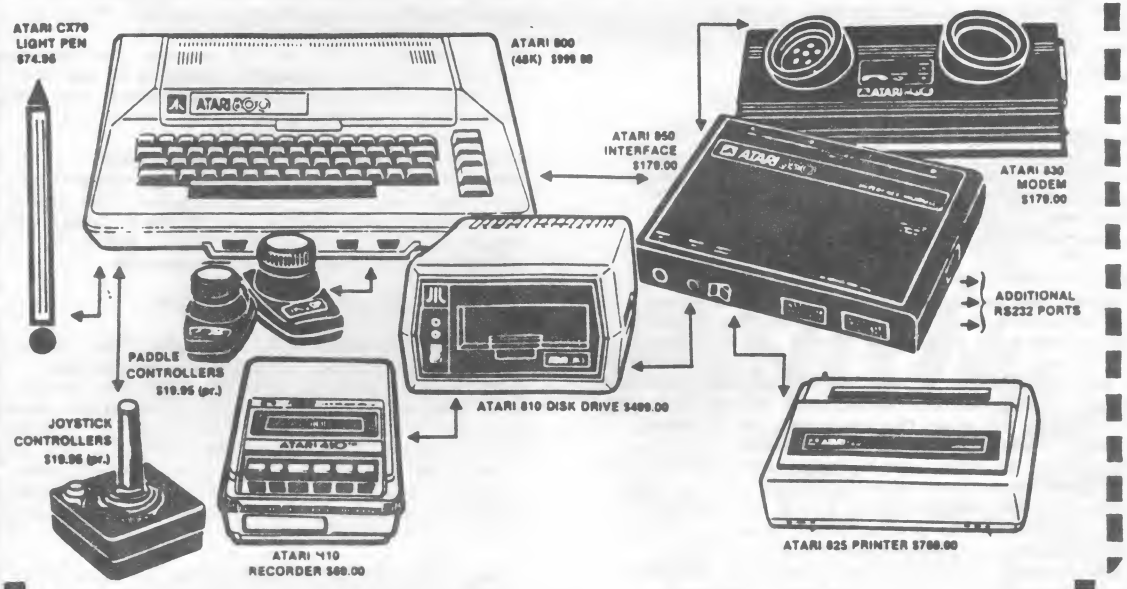
The most redeeming features of Regent Word II is it's ability to interface with Mail Merge Database and Regent Base. It is possible to hit control M and insert mail merge characters. If you buy Mail Merge Database and Regent Base, then you can draw on names (or whatever you want) and print up form letters, reports, labels, and so on.

Regent Word II lists for $99.95 but I have seen it for around $70 mail order. If you own Regent Base or want to utilize the mail merge abilities of this word processor your money will be well spent, however, if you just want a good solid word processor this may be a bit overpriced for what it gives you. If you fall into the later category I would recommend a less expensive word processor with more features, such as Word Writer by Timeworks (which also has a built in dictionary), a PD word count accessory and possibly Thunder! by Batteries Included if you are a REALLY rotten speller (if they are still in business when you read this). On a scale of 1 to 10, I rate Regent Word II a 7.

"As a matter of fact, it worked TOO well. I programmed my income and expenses, and it advised me that I couldn't afford to have a computer!"

FUNSTUFF

The Atari* Connection...



Hardware

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REMEMBER WHEN?...the above ad ran in the June, 1981 issue of "SoftSide" magazine. Take note of the $999.00 price for a 48K 800, and the value of today's ST becomes even clearer! - Reprint, courtesy of Raphael Nunez.

NEW ATARI GOES HIGH CAMP
by Scott Andersen

(Scott Anderson is the current President of STARFLEET Atari User Group of Denver, Colorado. This was first printed in the MILE HIGH Atari Magazine and is excerpted.)

At first it was just rumors. I'm sure you've heard some of them. Mergers and /or joint ventures. Atari and AT&T. Atari and Teledyne. Atari and whomever. But this one is confirmed. I saw the proof at last months outdoors exposition.

Atari is involved in a joint venture with Coleman Western, the outdoor products giant. The offspring of this marriage is the Coleman Camp Computer, hereafter known as the CCC.

It was on display in one corner of the Coleman booth at the outdoor show, with an Atari rep in attendance to demo the machine. It is quite a machine. Its most impressive feature is its ability to function without a power supply; the CCC uses white gas (Coleman Fuel) like so many other Coleman appliances. After filling the tank with fuel and pressurizing the system by hand pumping, you start up by firing the pilot/burner. The gas flame heats a sealed fluid system which powers a micro turbine generator. This in conjunction with a regulator provides all the voltage you need to power the CCC and all of its peripherals. The CCC is a 128K machine that utilizes the 6502 processor.

It has a new O.S. that is completely compatible with all Atari and third party software. Two built-in languages are switched on or off via a three way rocker switch, they are Basic (of course) and Action. Atari apparently had a large quantity of 400 keyboards that they decided to use up on the CCC. While being a pain to type on, the use of the membrane keyboard is understandable on a product that can be left out in the rain. Yes, the CCC is completely weatherproof. Rubber doors cover the 4 joystick ports, the I/O port, the serial/expansion bus, and the built-in disk drive and modem. The disk drive is a half height 5-1/4" that uses single or enhanced density. The modem is something completely different. It is said to be almost Hayes compatible, the exception being that it can't answer. This is understandable, you have no phone number. At the end of the 25 foot modem cable is a special induction device that you merely clamp over any phone cable. No pins, no plugs, no muss, no fuss. The device can only originate calls, but it can do it anywhere there is a telephone line, be it the backwoods or your back yard. 1200 Baud too! All this and only 14.4 pounds. But if that seems too heavy for you backpackers, the fuel tank/ pump/burner/stand assembly can be detached.

The remaining unit, at 8.3 pounds, can be used at any campsite simply by setting it on the campfire. Included in the $450 price are three new pieces of software.

The first, "Campcalc", is a wilderness management program. The second, "Camp-Talk", synthesizes bird and animal calls. The third is a graphics masterpiece. It is a Conestoga Wagon simulator called "Yerass". No more boring evenings around the campfire.

Coleman Camping Computer Update

Yes, since announced in the June 1986 issue of Mile High Magazine, Coleman products, has barely been able to keep up with the orders for the Coleman Camping Computer, let alone develop any new enhancements for the popular system. Due to some heat disipation problems, the Camp Fire power system has been dropped in favor of a new system using three 6 foot solar panels, generating enough heat to move a small turbin, which in turn is hooked to a generator.

This seems to be a much safer system, then the camp fire unit, and is ready to ship as of this writing. Estimated cost is a reasonable $1250 plus shipping. Estimated weight is 2200 pounds.

DuckPuck Direct, Wholesalers for Idaho has jumped on the CCC bandwagon with a couple of new third party software products for the Camp Talk Synthsis System. The premier release is the DOMESTIC ANIMAL DATA DISK. Wouldn't Old McDonald be envious! For those of you that live on a farm and would like to have exciting conversations with your horses, cows, pigs and chickens. Requires version 26 of ODS (Out Door Operating system.)

Also soon to be released: EXOTIC BIRD DATA DISK: Also for the Camp Talk Module, this is for those of you planing a trip down the Amazon who would like to keep in touch with the local wildlife. Another sure hit product from DuckPuck.

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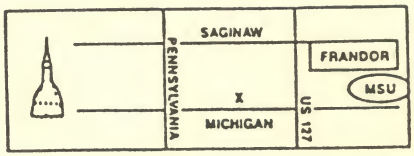

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Atari News

and COMMENT, by JOHN NAGY

MAGIC in DETROIT- The ATARIFEST was GREAT, and we have details and photos IN THIS ISSUE of MAM.

THE PRODUCTS ARE COMING... although we've heard it for months, ATARI now says that the MEGA machines, the SX-212 modem, the XE GAME SYSTEMS, and even the 80-column boxes are IN THE U.S. and are being delivered to dealers even as we speak. Honest. Well, that's what they say. Also, the PC CLONE should follow within 30 days, the LASER PRINTER still later, and the new 8-bit disk drive "when it's ready".

ONE MORE PRODUCT FOR THE "SOON" LIST: CD-ROMs! ATARI announced their COMPACT LASER DISK MEMORY device at Britain's PERSONAL COMPUTER WORLD SHOW in September. "To be shipped by Christmas", it will hold up to 350 MEG per disk, will play audio CD's, will play up to an hour of VIDEO, and sell in the UK for $650. Christmas in what year?

ATARI STOCKWATCH: DOWN again this month, ATARI stock dipped below $11, sliding from the mid-summer post-split high of about $16 a share. IF and WHEN the new products see SHELVES, expect another upturn.

Meanwhile, ATARI had a few million sitting around with nothing to do, so they bought their own chain store. FEDERATED, a west-coast electronics chain (sort of HIGHLANDS without refrigerators) lost a few mils last year, and ATARI figures to do better at the helm.

PRICES: The MEGA systems will be just under $2000 (that's TWO THOUSAND!) for the 2-meg, and just of $2000 for the 4-meg. If those prices seem too high, don't worry, most of us won't be able to finad any way to buy one anyway, since ATARI is planning to be HARD LINE on "NO MAIL ORDER" for the Mega line, and soon, the 1040ST too. We heard this before too, but the marketing folks at ATARI have convinced the TRAMIELS that cutthroat mail discounting is preventing a dealer organization from suceeding. This plan will get more $$$$ for the retail dealers, which of course means that they might actually want to SELL them. I hope it works, but it is also going to be SO VERY HARD to qualify as a MEGA/1040 dealer, that us small-towners may have to drive all day to buy an ATARI.

New at ATARI is WALT WILSON, formerly of APPLE, who will be in charge of building the dealer network that has been so desparately needed for so long.

BARCODE equipment for the 8-bit ATARI has long been asked for, and is here from XENIA RESEARCH in WASHINGTON. For $179, you get the barcode reader and software that lets it imitate keystrokes to the K: handler in any 800, XL, or XE. Also included is the barprint software, point-of-sale and other application software, and complete documentation for adapting your own software in just about any language or DOS. It plugs into joystick port 1. It may sound a little expensive, but barcode wands for ANY machine are regularly over $100 WITHOUT software. This might be the ideal thing for cheap automation of small business counter jobs. Contact XENIA, Box 4675, Federal Way, WA 98003, (206) 927-7018.

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M.A.M. this Month

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CLUBS:	PAGE
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING)	5
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK)	8
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS)	9
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO)	9
G.A.G. (FLINT)	11
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR)	13
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES)	14

FEATURES:	
ATARI NEWS	COVER
EDITORS NOTE - A Correction	15
MAGIC SHOW REVIEW	16
MEGA-DETAILS (NEW PRODUCTS)	19
SUCCESS AND THE BBS	20
ADD FUNCTION KEYS TO YOUR XL/XE	21
ST NOTES by LEROY VALLEY	22
ST-TRANSFORMER CONFERENCE	22
MORE ATARI NEWS	25
C LANGUAGE COURSE, Lesson 3	27
LAST HACKS - ERROR WHAT??!	30

ADVERTISERS:	
CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS	2
SHUBERT CORPORATION	4
NATIONAL COMPUTER CLINIC	10
MARS MERCHANDISING	12
COMPUTER EMPORIUM	26
MEI/MICRO CENTER	31
COPY QUICK	COVER

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

The DETROIT MAGIC ATARI SHOW was a smash success! Although I had prepared a review, Z-MAG ran such a comprehensive one, I dropped mine in its favor!

At the show, I talked to WAUG (Ann Arbor area ATARI club) officers about their having dropped out of MAM. They were shocked! It was a grand set of misunderstandings, but now set right again. WAUG is back in place in MAM.

IN FACT, MAM may move to ANN ARBOR for production, starting with the DECEMBER issue if all goes well. The member clubs are in process of being polled on their likes and hopes for the magazine, and prospective editors BILL AND PATTY RYAL have big plans. Included are the possible inclusion of MACE and GLASS (an ST club growing in Detroit), increased COUNTER SALES of MAM, and a REDUCTION of costs to the member clubs. A tall order for themselves, I hope this will work out well. If it does, MAM will have reached the goal I set almost two years ago- Statewide coverage, ten or more member clubs, and a circulation of perhaps 1,500 copies. More info next month!

Last month I talked about BEST PRODUCTS selling "MAGIC SAC COMPATIBLE" cartriges at ATARIFESTS. I repeated reports that said it was ripping off the hard work of DAVID SMALL and his MACINTOSH EMULATOR. After more investigation, it appears (as is so often the case) that there is another side to this story. The "rip-off" amounts to BEST selling a STANDARD EMPTY CART BODY. This is the same as you will find wrpped around any cart ROM chip for the ST. Additionally, BEST sells the MAC ROMS, needed if you want to use a LEGITIMATELY purchased MAGIC SAC from Small at DATA PACIFIC. The fact that if you accquire the SAC software, buy an empty cart, and slap the ROM in it, you can "emulate" the SAC... well, that isn't quite the RIP I had been led to expect. True, their advertising at earlier shows made it appear that BEST encouraged the buyer to "rip" the MAGIC SAC software, but BEST now steers clear of that. David Small still claims that BEST had actively pushed buyers towards piracy of his product, and there is some controversy over whether ANY, ALL, or SOME of the MAC ROMS that BEST sells are LEGIT or COPIES. Still, BEST is at least argueably NOT the villans they have been made out to be, and my apology for stating the case with half the facts.

David has sensibly modified his latest version of the AMAZING MAGIC SAC to ONLY work with HIS new cartridge.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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ST SIG Coordn.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

Leo Sell

October is here, October is here. Good things happen in October!! My birthday for one. Perhaps more important to you readers however, is the ANNUAL CHAOS AUCTION.

Each year in October CHAOS members and guests enjoy an opportunity to clean out their closets, sell their surplus stuff, and buy some bargains in hardware, software and sundry junk. In the meantime the Club makes a little money too. Here are the ground rules:

The AUCTION will take the place of the bulk of the 8-bit SIG meeting on October 17. Sellers should register from 9:30 to 10:00, and buyers from 10:00 to 10:15. The Auction will start at 10:15. We will begin with ST equipment and software and then go on with the 8-bit items.

POLICIES and RULES:

1. CHAOS collects ten percent of the FINAL BID for each SOLD item.

If a MINIMUM BID is required and the Seller does not accept the high bid, CHAOS will collect ten percent of the MINIMUM BID, not less than $1.00 and not exceeding $5.00.

2. All Buyers and Sellers must register for separate Buyer and Seller numbers.

3. Items for sale must be marked with the Seller number and the minimum bid, if any.

4. All software must be original, preferably with the original documentation.

5. All hardware in need of repair must be marked as such.

6. Merchandise must be paid for before removal from premises. All payment is due by the close of the meeting.

7. All merchandise is sold AS IS.

So, clean out those closets. Bring those checkbooks. Make a little and spend a lot. Help CHAOS and yourself, October 17.

Other club business is the usually plea for help and assistance. We are STILL in need of a new 8-bit Publications Librarian. The newsletter and libraries can always use more assistance.

VOLUNTEER TODAY!!!!

"The computer is down! Everybody think!"

Disk Library

THE LIBRARY TABLE
by John Baker

It's over. Summer that is. What cruel law of physics compresses the months of summer into an insignificant blip on the calendar, while at the same time allowing 11 1/2 months of winter to fill the remaining time. As you have probably gathered, I am not a winter type person. Oh well, spending more time over the keyboard is much more justifiable when the temperature drops.

Well, sure seems good to finally have the Mega ST's and the PC machines in the stores and selling like hotcakes after the long wait. No, don't panic thinking that this momentous event slipped by right under your nose without you being aware. Yuk, Yuk, Yuk. Just a little bit of humor to start the column out with. Now for the real news.

Auction time!!! October is the time to pick up unbelievable bargains at the annual C.H.A.O.S. auction. Bring anything of value to be auctioned off by Mr. Auction himself (Leo). Ten percent of the selling price goes to the club for this service. Don't miss it!

Don't miss out on the new disks that are being continually added to our fine software library. See some of these new selections at the meetings. Our libarians will be happy to fill you in on all the details.

Use your library to make your work easier. See you at the meeting.

ST LIBRARY
by Sally Nagy

New disks for this month are as follows: UTITILIES B15, GFA BASIC Tips and programs, UTILITIES B16, $ASSEMBLR, $C, $MODULA2 and $PPASCAL Source and tips; UTILITIES B17, $ASSEMBLY, $C_SOURCE and $PASCAL source and tips; UTILITIES B18, STBASIC1.ARC and STBASIC2.ARC--ST BASIC FILES, TREEFIX.ARC--in C, and some games for $TINYBASIC

UTILITIES C16, MICROCAD.PRG a drawing program, DGEN.TOS a RLE to Degas converter, FED.PRG a font editor, PVIEW.PRG to view RLE pictures, and more.

UTILITIES C17 features E_CUBE.PRG, Escher cubes an isometric drawing program, MFPRINT.TTP a multifile print program, NEOFUN.PRG which allows you to add options from a GEM menu to

pics, NEOSHOT.TOS which captures any full-screen in neo-format, and more.

UTILITIES D2

This has the newest version of STWRITER, version 1.75, UNDELETE, and files to convert 8bit files to ST files.

In the DEMOS Section;
SOUND/MUSIC 4, This NOW has the ALITE Christmas and MICHTRON'S Christmas files.

SOUND/MUSIC 7 has some digitized sounds--BAKIM.DAT, RUSH.DAT and VANHAL.DAT, *EZ_TRACK music files which require EZ TRACK, *MUSICSTU.DIO songs which require Music Studio to hear, MIDIBEAT.TXT, and Sound demos.

GRAPHIC DISPLAY 11 features AGEIS demos, DISKS.PRG, JULIA.ARC, VIEWIT, and PAWNDEMO (and Pawn hints).

SEPTEMBER ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

Lots of discussion this month about the products seen at the Atari Magic Show in Detroit. Since the show is covered elsewhere in this magazine, I'll not recap it. Suffice it to say that many of the new products are exciting and that we're all waiting for their release and availability. On the down side, the rumor that Atari will not market the Mega's mail order, but will sell only through stores, is disturbing. Shades of Apple at its worst!

The first demonstration was Sally Nagy's disk of the month. This had a demo made by the AEGIS ANIMATOR, that showed the power of this product to animate large objects (in this case, fish swimming above the ocean bottom, seaweed waving, etc.). Utilities on the DOM were a disk mechanic, and a file tools program. On the lighter side, an etch-a-sketch style drawing program, and an educational program called Devastator were included.

Jim Barnes then showed DESKCART, a cartridge based set of utilities that does lots of the basics - battery backed clock calendar, ramdisk, appointment reminder, etc. Jim then went on to demo INTERLINK ST, a "new generation" terminal program. Lastly, he showed PC-DITTO, the PC emulator that runs on the ST. He ran GWBASIC on the ST under PC-DITTO, to demonstrate compatibility.

After some more free discussion, demonstrations ended with a few (violent) new commercial games. In BARBARIAN, the barbarian must slash and jump his way through screens full of monsters, axe men, and traps, sort of like an enlarged Bounty Bob with a knife. Especially endearing are the sound effects and voices. "Hi-yuh", "yeaah", and "oof" comprise the barbarian's vocabulary. In PHANTASIE III, sequel to I and II, the graphics have been improved to make monsters and scenery more detailed than in the previous.

In closing, I'll pass on a bit of computer philosophy that Jim Barnes related during his demo: "This came with a nice big book. I didn't read the book, but just ran it and learned how to use it. A good reason to buy an ST."

8-BIT MEETING FOR SEPTEMBER

Over 30 people showed that fall would see resurgence in the meeting attendance by coming to the September 8-bit meeting. Guy Hurt had another good meeting planned, and despite the dissapointment of having the 12 monitors that usually lined the ceiling in the meeting room all lined up on the bench, disconnected, the meeting went well.

Discussion of the future of the club, the magazine, and volunteerism in general opened the meeting. The rules of the OCTOBER MEETING AUCTION were announced. Guy showed a videotape that he and Malcom Cleveland had made at the Detroit MAGIC ATARIFEST. The COMMODORE MOUSE for the 8-bit computers was demoed on an ATARI XL, showing the benifits and limits of the joystick-emulating mouse. Finally, the DISK OF THE MONTH was the long-awaited CUTE LABELS program that was a huge hit at the MAGIC SHOW.

THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD
by John Nagy

Not much room to tell you anything this month... but things are happening. Thanks to new 8-bit BBS librarian GARY FERRIS, we are digging out of the dozens of untestested files that backlogged the BBS this fall. Look for over 500 files now online, tested and indexed!.

Also, we welcome JOE KLEINSCHMIDT to the BBS, where he plans to be of assistance in getting and maintaining an even bigger ST file section.

If you haven't calle the CHAOS BBS, you are missing out on TOO MUCH of what it is to be an ATARI user. Not having a modem is no excuse: CHAOS has LOANERS for members to try out. Get with it, and get the fastest news going from CHAOS... (517) 371-1106!

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Next Meeting Oct. 15
At the Vo-Ed Building

Meeting Minutes

We will be meeting the third Thursday this month as the 1st falls on a Thursday. Hopefully you will be reading this BEFORE the meeting; not after. We meet at the Calhoun Area Vocational Center at 475 E. Roosevelt. The room is directly across from the office, between the two front enterances. Meeting starts at 7PM and goes to 9.

At this months meeting, we will be having a face off between the U.S. Doubler and the Happy. Both enhancements offer faster read/write speeds to your disk drives plus the ability to back up your copy protected programs. Both allow true double density. This should be an interesting comparison of the two Souped up 1050's.

We will be having another disk of the month (DOM). Last month'S double disk special was a real success. I hope you have fun with Super States 3-D. If anyone draws up some new 3-D files please bring them to the meeting. For those that missed the last meeting we still have some copies of Turbo Basic and Super States.

The club library has recently got a big shot in the arm. Some 180 new double sided disks for the 8 bit and 80 new ST disks! We hope to have a new library listing by the meeting, or soon after.

New Library policy. The disks will be sold for $1.00 or exchange for a clean disk to members only. This is $.50 per disk side! Your club and Atari "Power without the price." Folks this a value you just can't beat. The librarian will need your order before the meeting. We generally don't have time a the meetings for disk copying.

New product releases from Atari still seem to be off somewhere in the future. I got a guess-imate of before Christmas for the new Atari products from Sandy Austin. The three inch disk drive for the 8 bit machine is dead. We saw the XE game machine, the new 1200 baud modem, the lazer printer the Mega ST at the Magic Show. Now we need some Magic to show up in the stores.

Library Additions

As you may or may not have heard, we the Battle Creek Group, have rented the CHAOS complete library for copying.

Dan Egan, myself and Josephine (ST) have been laboring over it for the past few weeks and with a little luck will have it completed by the next meeting. I had no idea it would be thg over it for the past few weeks and with a little luck will have it completed by the next meeting. I had no idea it would be this tedious or time consuming with the actual copying, catagorizing, and indexing, but it is coming along and we should have a library anyone would be proud of. There will be additions to games, sound library, education, Koala Pics, ANTIC and ANALOG MAG. disks and a large utilities section. There has been an addition of 180 8-bit disks and 80+ ST disks. As a member, past, present or future, there should be enough information and programs to keep anyone busy for the rest of their lives.

Some people have complained about the price of software on the market ($20 to $40). Well, complain no more; our library has plenty for only $1 per doublesided disk of any catagory. The $1 is just to cover part of the cost of renting the CHAOS Library which was $100 and really put a big dent in our coffers. If we have a whole listing by next meeting please take one and show it to your non-member friends, for this alone should spark some interest in our ATARI GROUP. Believe me there has to be more interest for this group to survive.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

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GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

G.R.A.S.S.

President George Nosky
2440 Parkridge S.E.
Grand Rapids MI 49506
616 942 1527

Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville MI 49333
616 795 7373

News of our last meeting

The big event at our September meeting was the resignation of our President Ron Fargo. Ron cited the increase on work at his job as the reason for having to step down. George Nosky will finish out Ron's term which expires in January.

Due to an error on the part of your leadership the library-meeting room is booked for the first Wednesday of October, so we will meet on Oct. 21. The meetings for the rest of the year will be on the first Wednesday of each month.

There will be a Board of Directors meeting at the home of George Nosky on Oct. 13 at 7:30.

Other news from the Grand Rapids Area: The Electronics Boutique has opened a store in Woodland Mall. The store is managed by Skip Metzler. Their phone number is 616-949-5800. I had a nice talk with Skip the other night. He says that they are part of a large chain of stores. This enables them to get quick service (often overnight) from their warehouse. Their supply is big and they have more things in the store than any I have seen in Grand Rapids, and a large catalog. They also stock the 16-bit Atari Equipment. The prices I saw were in line with the mail-house prices and you don't have to wait.

As you know, 8-bit Atari software is hard to find in G.R., especially on the south side. Maybe if we show an interest Electronics Boutique will change this. They seem to be trying at this point. Stop in and look around and tell them about the club magazine! Maybe they will buy an Ad!

Pre's Report

Septembers meeting was a good one! We talked about our new BBS. There were a number of other things.

* If you have call waiting on your phone then you are causing us problems on the BBS. When you are uploading or downloading and you get a call then BBS crashs, and we don't know why. Please watch this. Thanks

* We are meeting in room 305 in Dewing Hall. We have met there for the last couple of meetings but some of you did'nt know (sorry Gus). Next meeting we will have a sign on the front door.

* Our next meeting will be a real special one, Alan Lenan will be bring in all his ST and Midi gear to show us how to make music with the ST. From what I understand this will really be a show!!! Don't miss it.

* Over the next several months we will cover several topic in our meetings. They will be: Desk top Publishing (8 bit and ST), Language and utilities, and last but not least, Games (can't miss that!).

* We are looking for a picture to put on our BBS intro screen. You will find a utility on the BBS to do this with.

* I had a number of requests from people to teach a class on SynCalc and SynFile. So over the next three months I will spend some time after the meeting and teach those that are interested on how to use and merger these two programs. I will also include B/Graph and a word proccesor merge as well.
*Our next meeting will be October 10 at 11:00 in room 305 on the third floor in Dewing hall see ya there

* I have had a number of calls lately from people that are interested in the club but can't make it to the next meeting. If you are one of these people you can receive this news letter by sending me a check for $20.00. Make check payable to GKAUG and send it with your name and address to: Daniel Youngs 607 Lay Blvd Kalamazoo Mi. 49001.

Daniel Youngs 616-388-3164

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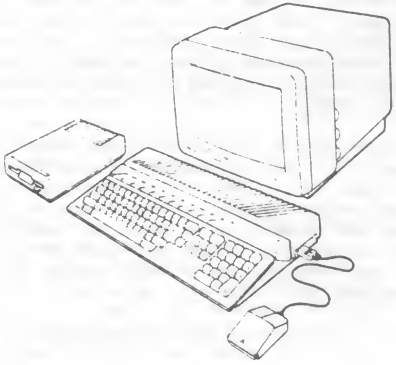

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GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

Presidential Mumblings for October
by Jim Steele

Well, here we go once again with yet another batch of mumblage from the teflon president. In fact, this will be my last column as GAG president. (Try to hold down the cheers :)) I've had the job ever since I foolishly said, "Gee, I think a user group would be neat". I've decided not to take another term, mainly because I want to spend more time on the Amiga. It's also about time that some new blood took over. When I started the group, I wanted an informal group of hackers (in the true sense of the term). I've never believed that the group should entertain people, rather to provide a place where people could meet and discuss their problems or show off their latest display hack. Be that as it may, it's been an interesting 4 years. I'm not planning to drop out of things Atarian altogether, there's the matter of a few bugs to zap in Cutelabels. But as a practical matter I've already consigned the faithful 800xl to the legendary computer closet. This is not to say that the 800 is useless. It still can do a lot of usefull tasks. Unfortunately , I'm a hobbyist. We aren't satisfied with less than the best we can afford. Now, if they only had a desktop CRAY.....

Good luck to the next el presidente, whoever is picked (more likely drafted!) I'll be available to help with the transition, if needed.

Be sure to come out to the October meeting, we're planning something special for the people who helped out at the ATARI MAGIC show. After the Library business, we will elect next year's officers. (RUN!) Then we will adjourn to Little Ceasar's Pizza. Those of you who helped out at the show will be our guests, the rest will have to chip in!

At the September meeting Jerry gave us a financial report on the Atari show. Apparently, we did very well, with a good showing at the booth and a good share of the gate. We'll get our gate share later when the finances are finished up. When you've got money, you've got to spend it, right? We decided to subscribe to the magazine & disk versions of several magazines. We also budgeted the replacement cost for our library's disk drives, which are showing their age and will need replacement soon. We're also getting a Post Office Box for the group. Keep an eye on these pages for the new address.

One last thing, the folk at Abacus Software have extended the user groups an offer on their ST books. If enough people are interested we can get quite a deal. The more we get the cheaper each becomes. If you are interested, be sure to come to the October meeting, the offer expires October 15th- the day after the meeting. If you're interested and can't make the meeting, get ahold of us on the FACTS BBS.

Well that's the news from Lake Woebegon, where all the phone lines are clean, all the disks are formatted, and all the downloads are above average. (Sorry, Garrison)

See 'ya on the boards, -Jim

Software

GAG DISKS FOR OCTOBER
by Jerry Cross

We have eight new disks this month.

For the game players, Disk 229 is for you! Crossword is a great crossword puzzle game. There are 26 sample puzzles on the disk. The game is excellent, but they did not put in a puzzle maker so you can create your own files. Also, ROCKS is a great space game with nice graphics and sound. In CASTLE, the object is to prevent the enemy from climbing ladders to the top of your castle. SCHLOSS is a maze type game, and CRAPS is a good version of the dice game.

Disk #230 is a telecommunications disk. 1030 EXPRESS is a BETA version of Keith Ledbetters excellent terminal program. This is Version 3.0, which adds many new features to the original program. When the final version comes out, I will update this disk. Also on this disk is a demo of the OASIS bbs system.

which is a commercially sold program. Autodial is a goofy little utility that lets you dial your phone by holding it next to the TV speaker. All you do is hold your handset next to the TV!

Disk #231 is another disk of KOALA pics.

Disk #232 is an AMS disk, featuring songs by THE MONKEES! (Kids, ask your folks who they are)

Disk #233 is another AMS disks, this time featureing FLUTE, a huge file of clasic music.

Disk #234 and #235 are more great RLE pictures.

And, FINALLY!!! Disk #236 contains CUTE LABELS! This program prints out neat mailing labels using PRINTSHOP Icons. You can use icons on either side of the label (either the same icon, or two different ones!). It prints out text in four sizes, and in any font. The disk comes complete with several sample icons, over 30 fonts, plus several Printshop utilities that were included on past GAG disks. These include Flipper, Shoptool, PSPic, and Picprint.

This program was a huge success at the Atari-Magic show held in August.

That's it for this month. See you all at the next meeting!

Genesee Atari Group

meeting change:

The 4th Saturday sessions are moving back to the Neithercut School, beginning with September's meeting.

Next Meetings:
September 26 10am Neithercut
October 14, 6:30pm Neithercut
* Officer election *
October 24, 10am Neithercut
November 11, 6:30pm Neithercut

Genesee Atari Group is a non- profit user group based in Flint, Michigan. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut school, 2010 Crestbrook, Flint MI (6:30pm). We also have a 4th Saturday session during the school year at 10 am.

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WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

WAUG Minutes -- Sept. Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Mike Olin. Mike welcomed all new visitors, and directed them to Pattie Snyder-Rayl for more information about joining WAUG.

Mike Olin discussed the Atari MAGIC show and if you were unable to attend, you truely missed out on a exceptional show. He talked about some of the things that were there, such as the MEGAs, Atari's laser printer and 1200 baud modem, Atari PC, and the new XE Game system. He also mentioned some things that were not at the show: the 80 column card for the 8-bit, the new 5-1/4 drive, and it was mentioned that the 3 1/2 drive has been dropped for good by Atari.

Mike also mentioned members had not received the Sept. issue of Michigan Atari Magazine, for which it was thought Doug Feldman had collected the money. Apparently not enough money was collected for the entire summer. WAUG! purchased a few copies of the Sept. MAM and made these available to members at the end of the meeting. There was considerable interest to continue receiving MAM and participating in that magazine as in the past.

Mike listed the proposed meeting topics for the year. Topics include graphics/printers; repair and troubleshooting; and a music night.

For the December meeting, the officers have planned a Christmas party/MidiMaze tournament and one lucky member will win the MidiMaze software which was purchased by the club for this event. Raffle tickets for this software will be on sale at the WAUG! meetings, starting in October.

The rest of the WAUG! board members introduced themselves and very briefly described what they are doing for the club...

Vice President Pattie Synder-Rayl said that she was in the process of obtaining a room at Washtenaw Community College that WAUG! may be able to use free of charge. [ED: See Pattie's article in the Oct. Newsletter for more details]

Mike Olin announced Secretary Doug Feldman had resigned in order to devote more time to his family, and a special election will be held at the October meeting to fill the vacant position. [ED: Tim Grzechowski filled in as Secrectary for this month. Thanks, Groovus!]

Bob Carlini was unable to make it to the meeting, so Mike Olin gave the treasurer's report. We have 19 new members and thanks to the disk sales at the MAGIC show we had a very substantial increase in our bank funds. The members were asked to consider what we should do with the money. A suggestion was to buy an 8-bit and an ST disk drive for use by the WAUG! disk librarians.

News Editor Bill Rayl told us of his plans for the newsletter, which include getting advertising, increasing the size of the newsletter, and starting monthly columns.

Mike Pieronek, the 8-bit librarian, talked about the disk sales at the MAGIC show, and that he had added three new disks this month. A number of other disks are being organized for addition to the library.

ST Librarian Bruce Urbanski reported that the ST library has risen from 23 disks to a total of 59 disks. This is due in part from a disk trade with the Toronto user group at the MAGIC show. New programs in the ST library include the Citadel BBS--runnable version and C source code, a full-featured public domain C compiler, networking software, and the list goes on.

A representative of Lighting Bolt Computers spoke to the members. The company sells hardware and software to user groups at a reduced rate, delivering orders at the next club meeting. Interested members were asked to fill out a questionnaire and price lists were available for ST hardware. For more information, contact a WAUG! officer.

There was a recommendation from Bill and Pattie that membership renewal dues be raised from $5 to $10. Discussion about this followed, and the increase will be voted on at the October meeting.

The meeting formally concluded at 9:20.

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING: The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

Notice → October 17, 1987 ← Notice
November14, 1987

*** *** OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Joe Manelis	ST Disk Lib.	
George Stuart	News Letter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You an get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8- bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Presidential Address

The September meeting was everything that we expected. The room was packed with people (about 30) and we gained 2 new members! A lot of people were talking about ways to promote our club, and we even had a few volunteers to handle some advertising jobs. The club treasury is looking pretty good, and you can expect to see some raffles in the near future. I'm preparing a survey to address your needs and concerns which will be mailed to all members. Expect to see it in your mailbox around the 1st of October. Please bring the completed survey to the October meeting. If you can't attend, then send the survey to me at the address on the survey form PRIOR to October 15th. I'de like to be able to tabulate them for the November meeting. Remember, if you don't fill out the survey you aren't allowed to complain until the next survey (???). See you all in October...

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

October promises to be exciting month when Al Jennings demo's Award Ware...an inexpensive certificate generator for the Atari 8- bit. Come and find out if cheap is really cheap or do I have to take a loan out for my next program? In the same vein, Tom Wheeler will be demoing Certificate Maker on the ST. Come and see this excellent program!!

Remember, the club has purchased both of these packages and will be raffling them off at the meeting. (No really!! I'll even remember the tickets!)

Meeting Minutes

RELICS TO RELISH

Like Clue, if you think you're another Mike Hammer then you should've liked 222B Baker St. Ted Beauchamp did a fine job demonstrating this game by Datasoft. Ted gave several good tips on speeding up game play and maneuvering Sherlock Holmes around the streets of London. News Station that Char Davis demoed back in, in, in well I can't remember the month, was finally raffled off. Nelson Greene was the proud winner of News Station, a type setter that uses Print Shop icons. Al Jennings let TAG raffle off two games Bop & Wrestle and an old bowing game. The proceeds minus $5.00 went to the treasury. Let's see, now where did I put that program I no longer use... Meanwhile, in the ST realm... PC Ditto, the IBM emulator, was demoed first by LeRoy Valley. After

running the program, LeRoy proceeded to run IBM DOS 3.30, Lotus 123 (release 2a), DBase III+, and an assortment of public domain utilities. Everything performed flawlessly, and the emulator worked as expected. Various setup features of PC Ditto were demonstrated and some of the current problems (including the hard drive problem) were discussed. All in all, this is an EXCELLENT package and works as advertised. If you need or desire IBM compatibility, then is an inexpensive way to obtain it.

The next goodie on the agenda attracted a lot of attention. This was LeRoy's new Color Computereyes ST. LeRoy brought a complete setup, including a Camcorder. He then demoed the unit by taking several pictures of members, and the results were excellent. Pictures taken at home usually use normal incandescent lights, but the lights in the library are fluorescent and the pictures taken were much better. The software Computereyes includes with the package is one of it's strongest selling points. Once the picture is captured, you can modify the picture on screen. This allows you to adjust colors, brightness, and contrast and view it before you save it. LeRoy then loaded up Publishing Partner and demonstrated how he could pull his graphic masterpieces into PP and make things like "Wanted Dead or Alive" posters. An extremely handy feature in this club!

LeRoy then loaded up Pixel Pro, a picture processing program offered in the latest STart magazine. Pixel Pro allows you to modify colors, invert images, "Chunkify" them (makes the picture look blocky or computerized) change tints and a host of other goodies. If you own or are buying Computereyes, then grab the latest issue of STart...It's a must!

****** ****** TAG INVENTORY:

1 Old ATARI 800, 8-bit disks. Oh yeah, and some ST stuff too (stuffed in your left shirt pocket).

****** ****** 8-BIT TIP:

If you have a cartridge from OSS that doesn't want to boot in your 130XE, shake the critter and see if it rattles. If it does chances are it's not fitting into the expansion port properly. CAUTION THIS FIX COULD VOID YOUR WARRANTY! Now for some fun. The problem: The cartridge doesn't have any screws to hold the PC board in place. That means the cartridge is glued together so to disassemble it you will need a fine tooth hack saw blade. Take the saw blade and slowly run it along the center seam of the cartridge until you are almost through, do this to both sides. Carefully using both hands cupped around the cartridge with your fingers slowly prying the cartridge apart, be careful and note the way the PC board comes out. Now take a piece of paper and fold it so that it fits between the top of the case and the PC board. Reassemble the cartridge and use a rubber band to hold it together so that you can use Super glue on the seams. I can't guarantee this will work for you but it sure did save me fifty bucks.

****** EXPIRATION NOTICE ******

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

****** ****** 8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Nelson Greene Monitor
Ted Beauchamp Disk Drive
Al Jennings Printer and interface

****** ****** ST Equipment Volunteers:

Dennis Wright Monitor
LeRoy Valley 1040ST
Tom Wheeler Printer and cable.

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

Editor's Note

Editor's Note
by Richard Barnes

We recently received a telephone call from Steve Godun of the New Jersey Atari Computer Group. It seems that in the Feb. 87 issue of Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine we printed a short routine to speed up the cursor on the XL and XE series. Steve originally but the Atari Tips on Z-Mag and then made a change. He had just read our issue and noted that we had not received the correction submitted to Z-Mag in a later issue.

The corrected version is as follows:

POKE 729,15 : POKE 730,1

where 729 controls how long to wait after a key is pressed before repeating the character. Address 730 controls the speed of the repeat.

Thanks goes to Steve Godun, the original author, for taking the time and expense to advise us of this correction.

Atari News

Atari MAGIC Show In Detroit (8/28-8/30)
By Steve Godun
ZMAG EXCLUSIVE (C)1987 Syndicate Services.

The Atari MAGIC (Michigan Atari General Information Conference) show attracted young and old alike. Some 50-60 software publishers, hardware developers, magazine publishers, and mail order houses attended the show. Important names in the Atari community were present, among them Keith Ledbetter of Express fame, and Neil Harris and Sandi Austin of Atari.

Important Atari supporters like ICD, Atari (of course), Hybrid Arts, Antic, MichTron, Astra, Abacus, and Innovative Concepts were all showing new hardware/software products for the Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computers.

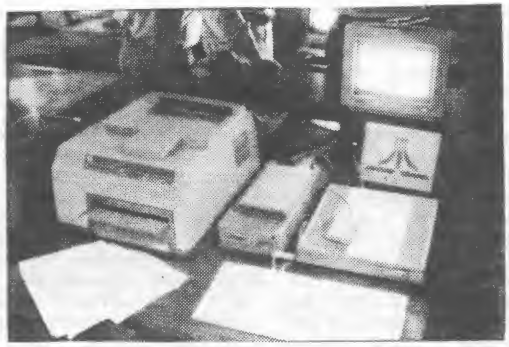
My first stop in the gymnasium-sized Atari show was at Hybrid Arts' MIDI setup. At the heart of Hybrid Arts' display was the impressive 16-player MIDI-Maze game. Surprises were abound all throughout the show, but I was more than startled to see no less than 16 of the ill-fated PS3000 color monitor/disk drive units being linked to 520ST's for MIDI-Maze.

Almost all the time during the show, is was a free-for-all as people scrambled for one of the 16 positions. Hybrid Arts ran hourly tournaments that all could get in on. Winners for each tournament were given a pass to return to the show on Sunday to compete for the grand prize - a Casio CZ-320C keyboard and a stack of Hybrid Arts software. I happen to have won that prize (a little pat on the pack please...).

Hybrid Arts also had two other stations set up, each running with a 1040ST and several keyboards. The show is always alive with very well created melodies. No Walkman units wanted here!

Next to Hybrid Arts was a large indoor tent that housed Atari Corp's products. Several 520ST-FM, 1040ST, and 130XE computers were running the most popular Atari softwarem such as "Battlezone", "Rogue", and "Joust" on the ST's with "Planetarium" and "AtariWriter Plus" on the XE's. The XE Game System was also displayed running "Bug Hunt", the first game to use Atari's TV gun. Other Atari products were present, most notably the Atari PC (very nice unit, although very slow when compared to the ST speeds), the Atari Laser Printer (producing

ATARI LASER PRINTER, HARD DRIVE, MEGA



free samples of high resolution flyers), the Mega ST-4 (many of the other developers were also using pre-production models with no Blitter chip for demos, although Atari's model did indeed have Blitter installed), and the still-to-be -released SX-212 modem.

All models except for the Atari PC are clothed in Atari XE grey with slanted lights and an almost art-deco insignia (the word "Laser" on the laser printer is in a 'hot pink' color). The Atari PC is set up in bone white. A monochrome monitor was being used on the PC. No comment from the guys from Atari. Also, there was still no sight of the 8-bit 80 column card or the new XF551 disk drive. Atari claims problems adapting the SX-212 to the 8-bit, although on the ST it runs fine. The XF551 is "still very early in its development to be shown". No comment pertaining to the XEP-80. Hmmm...

Atari is still "iffy" on release dates for these products. The laser printer, Mega ST-4, and the XE Game System are scheduled for mid to late September ("Definately way before Christmas" says Neil Harris), and the Atari PC and SX-212 are to be released shortly thereafter.

Innovative Concepts, a relatively small company with some really neat 8-bit upgrades, showed several new products. A kit that allows you to install four function keys (like the extinct 1200XL) on any XL/XE computer was available for $15. The keys are totally programmable (nice for making macros in modem programs), and default to cursor control, key click on/off, etc. The ICX-85 keypad (a modified Atari CX-85 keypad that needs no handlers yet works with

all 8-bit software) was available. A trade-in policy is in effect; Send them your CX-85 keypad and you'll save $10 on the ICX-85. RAM-Aid is for owners of upgraded XL/XE Ataris. Install this, and you now have the capability to perform a coldstart without turning your computer off, but still retain all data in your RamDisks. An external modem speaker, Modem-Mouth, is for modems who don't have one (like the Atari 835 and 1030). Contact Innovative Concepts for prices, information, and ordering.

Microdaft of "Chipmunk" fame was there showing two new arcade games. "Dropzone" is a Defender-like game that offers high resolution graphics and excellent animation. "Solar Star" is a hybrid game that reminds me somewhat of the Tron "Light Cycles". You travel over a huge grid avoiding walls while trying to shoot and overcome energy areas and crystals. Both games are for the 8-bit Atari (hints of a C-64 version were dropped) and are scheduled for release on October 1st.

A most interesting product was shown by Quantum Microsystems. They were showing a pad that looked very much like a large (17.5"x11") white Koala pad, but it had a thinner, wired stylus and was connected to an ST. Moving the stylus across the pad simulates the movement of a mouse. Labeled as "ProTablet ST", Quantum claims their pad is much more accurate than the Atari mouse, allowing up to 250 lines per inch. "ProTablet ST" is available now for $395, and includes the tablet, digitizing pen, cable, and driving accessory.

ICD, along with the Keith "Mr.Express" Ledbetter, was showing their newest addition to the Express line of modem software, "BBS Express ST". Only for the ST, "BBS Express ST" is probably the best ST BBS program around today. "BBS Express ST" is just starting to ship for a list price of $79.95. It features 40/80 column support, XMODEM and YMODEM protocols, threaded message bases, full descriptions on all UL/DL files, and COMPLETE sysop maintenance. Some lucky show purchasers got a personally autographed copy of the new program (at no extra cost).

Also being shown at the ICD booth was a 60-megabyte hard disk for the ST. It is actually two 30-meg hard disks in one sleek, attractive case, but offers more than a conventional hard disk. Besides the storage, the ICD model also contains a silent fan and a real-time clock/calander. The unit is large and strong enough to support an ST monitor. The model shown was not a complete model. No list price or release date was given.

When asked about SpartaDOS-X, the new cartridge-oriented DOS for Atari, ICD claims to be working on it but are having a few difficulties in programming. This new DOS will be on a 256K ROM cartridge and will have a souped-up version of SpartaDOS 3.2 on it, along with a database and "whatever else we can think of". ICD is considering much input from the current Atari community, so if you have a suggestion for Sparta-X, send them your ideas!

When asked about problems with the MIO board, ICD claimed to have fixed all known bugs prior to June 1987 and is still shipping both the 256K and 1-meg models. The 80-column adapter is "loosing interest...because of a lack of a suitable market", so even that might not hit the streets in the near future. But, you never know.

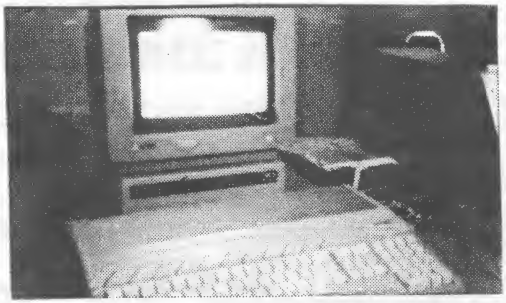
The MichTron display occupied most of the far wall. Their feature product was the arcade-to-home laser game "Dragon's Lair" (marketed as "Journey Into The Lair" for copy-right reasons). The version they had running was played on a 1-meg 520ST-FM, color monitor (for player input), Panasonic video disc player, and a Panasonic TV (for showing the pictures). The game is great in itself, although it loses just about all of its original arcade action. No longer is "Dragon's Lair" a split second arcade adventure; the player can now spend (literally) hours deciding on where to go. Joystick input has been substituted for a slow point-and-click mouse command. You actually have to tell the computer what to do; no more simple up/down/etc moves to memorize, you now have to say, for example, "Turn Swing Sword" to vanquish a creature in one instance. Personally, I don't think this will sell very well.

Plans to incorporate the other two major laser arcade games, "Space Ace" and "Cliff Hanger", are in the works. No release date was set, although pre- orders were being taken at the show.

Other MichTron releases include "Maz", a sort of computerized cat and mouse game were you must find the exit to a huge maze before your opponent does while avoiding the always moving cat. "Airball" is a offshoot of "Marble Madness", but with a more 'natural' background to it. Instead of a scrolling abstract maze, you now have a screen-by-screen maze lined with trees (well, that's what they look like) and such. MichTron was also offering RAM upgrades for the ST. A 2-meg 520ST kit and a 2.5-meg 1040ST kit are available, and both require no soldering inside the ST. Contact MichTron for details.

Alpha Systems had the "Turbocharger" on display. This is a double sided 8-bit disk that is packed full of useful ML subroutines that you can incorporate into your BASIC programs. Also for the 8-bit, the "Parrot II+"

ICD CORP's ST MULTI-HARD DRIVE/CLOCK UNIT MAKES A NICE MONITOR STAND TOO.



was there. Those familliar with the original "Parrot" know that the hardware part isn't very sturdy or sensitive. The new version is VERY strong and VERY sensitive, and makes a clearer digitized sound - almost as good as an ST!

Speaking of ST sound, Alpha Systems also produced "Digisound", the ST equal to the "Parrot II+". The unit on display was quite impressive. Sound is practically flawless when compared to the original source. Excellent!

"Magic Sac+" wasn't as popular as Data Pacific had hoped. It certainly wasn't one of the busier booths at the show. On a 4-meg ST, the user can have up to a 3900K Macintosh capable of running most popular Mac software. However, in order to use the software, the user must have several things. Among them are a set of Mac ROM chips (so that the thing will work in the first place), access to a Macintosh computer, and communications software for both computers. Null modem cables are provided with the Sac+, a helpful surprize. The "Magic Sac+" also has its own clock/calendar for time/date stamping. Details were limited to an 8.5"x11" flyer, and reps at the show were somewhat unwilling to speak about certain compatability problems. Contact Data Pacific for more details.

The show attracted many mail order houses. Mars Merchandising was there in full force with great deals on 8-bit and ST products stacked from floor to ceiling (literally). Sector One Computers, with not nearly as much stuff as Mars, was doing well in their double booth. Basic Bits And Bytes was a bonanza of Atari printers, 50%-off software, and more than I can list. They were the only place at the show selling the Indus ST DS/DD disk drive, a unit about 1/2 the size of an ST drive and runs (of course) much quieter and a bit faster. Rite Way Computers was offering membership into a software preview club along with many other nice deals.

Since this IS an Atari-oriented show, user groups were abound. GAG (Genesee Atari Group) was there showing off their newest Print Shop application, "Cute Labels" by Jim Steele. This will print out 1"x3.5" labels using multiple fonts and Print Shop icons. This is a VERY flexible label program! GAG is offering "Cute Labels" alone for $9.95, and a pack of 6 Print Shop icon disks (around 600-700 icons) for $20. A complete "Cute Labels" package ("Cute Labels" plus the 6 icon disks) is available for a mere $27. Incredible bargain!

MACE, Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, was there selling back issues of "MACE Journal", trying to gain new members, and showing a few demos. Other user groups, WAUG (Washtenaw Atari Users Group), GLASS (Great Lakes Atari ST Support), CHAOS (Capitol Hill Atari Owners Society), and of course, MAGIC were all present and showing off some of the latest ST and 8-bit programs, demos, and hardware (like the Mega ST-4).

Overall, the show was a grand success for user and vendor alike. Everybody went home happy and almost nobody left empty-handed. I was a bit sad when I walked into the large once-filled ballroom and saw nothing but soda bottles, product flyers, and empty bags. Oh well...There will be other shows. But the Atari MAGIC Show has proven, once again, that Atari computers are here to stay, this time for good.

16 STs LINE UP FOR "KILL A HAPPY FACE" MIDI-MAZE COMPETITION. THE TOURNAMENT WINNER GOT A CASIO SYNTHSIZER, COURTESY OF HYBRID ARTS. (PHOTOS BY JOHN NAGY)

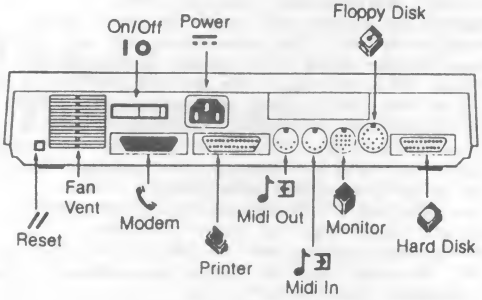
MEGA ST COMPUTER

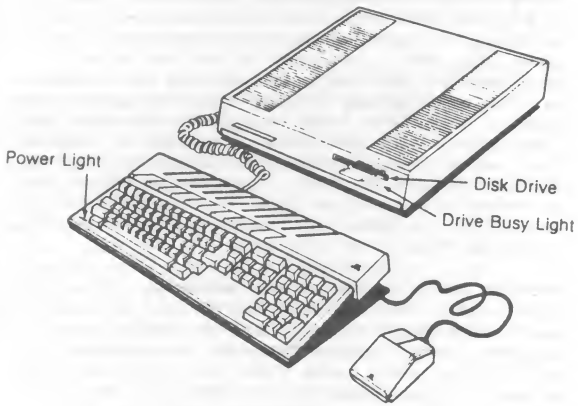
Computer

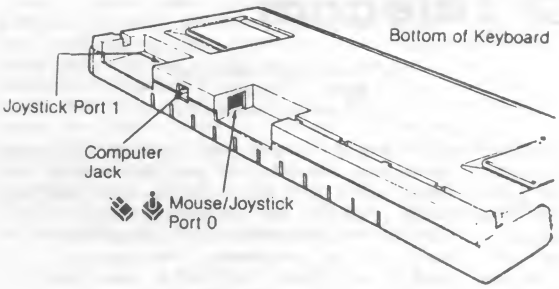
Processor	MC68000, 32-bit internal, 16-bit external architecture; 24-bit address bus; 8 MHz frequency
Memory:	
MEGA ST1™	1 megabyte (1,048,576 bytes) of RAM; 192 kilobytes (196,608 bytes) of ROM
MEGA ST2™	2 megabytes (2,097,152 bytes) of RAM; 192 kilobytes (196,608 bytes) of ROM.
MEGA ST4™	4 megabytes (4,194,304 bytes) of RAM; 192 kilobytes (196,608 bytes) of ROM

The Computer's Back Panel

Many types of external devices, called peripherals, can attached to the back panel of your MEGA ST Computer







MEGA-DETAILS
from The Irishman's Software, Inc.
1022 Highway A1A
Satellite Beach, Florida, 32937

The Mega St has arrived in Florida !!!!!!!!! The Melbourne Computer Show, Sept 25-27, Melbourne Florida Displayed by The Irishman's Software, Inc. (305)-777-8257 will display the recently arrived 4 meg RAM Mega ST computers. Inside we found the Blitter chip, 4 banks of T1000-10 (1 megabit IC's) a battery backup clock, 2 (TWO) sockets for some kind of external interfact. There is a slide in the case (Approx 2" x 1") for some future THING to come out of the case.

In some preliminary graphics timing tests (eyeballed!!) the bird flew across the screen at least 2X faster with the blitter turned on. Oh yes you can turn the blitter on/off via the mouse and a desk acc which is built into the machine. The fan is really quiet! The blitter, I think, is a flat pack IC, therefore how would one mount it in a present 520/1040??

The detachable keyboard which the mouse must plug into (you really knew that that would happen as the keyboard has the CPU that reads the keyboard andthe mouse) is much better than the 1040. It is attached via a telephone type coiled cable.

BAD FEATURE!!!! Why the Hel* did they put the ON/OFF and RESET switches in the back of the frick*n thing!!!! Minor point which probably will be corrected some day. But most people, like us attach the computers and accessories via a surge protector mulitpug outlet and turn it all off via it.

THANK YOU ATARI FOR SUPPLYING US WITH THE 4 MEG MACHINE FOR THE GREATER MELBOURNE FLORIDA COMPUTER SHOW!!!!

Telecom

The Pros and Cons of
BBS Success
By Randy Pearson

The one major dream of any BBS Systems Operator is, quite obviously, to have a popular board. No SysOp would want to run a boring BBS that no one ever calls, right? But when you think about it, having a successful BBS definitely has it's own brand of problems. Nothing is ever all good or all bad. So, let's take look at the pros and cons of BBS success.

The most obvious advantage is having more callers. No SysOp only wants five callers a day. With more users comes more popularity, excitement, etc. But, when a board gets successful, and is pulling out 30-40 callers a day, there must be a lot more people TRYING to call, and getting that dreaded busy signal. How many times have you tried calling your favourite board and found it to be busy? But try a small board you rarely call, and get on first time. I don't know how many people have come up to me and said, "Man, I've been trying to get on your board for weeks, and it's always busy!" And many of those people tend to give up trying to call altogether, since it seems fruitless. It is to be expected, but I always wonder just how many autodialers are fixed on my BBS at 4:00 pm on a weekday afternoon, and how many of those will give a shrug and give up.

With more callers comes more activity in the message base. Those two usually go hand-in-hand, and Fletcher Memorial, my BBS, is no exception. Back when I first started, I was getting maybe 10-20 messages per day. But as I got more popular, the number jumped to 50 per day, sometimes as many as 80! I always loved my message base when it was rolling in high gear. All those conversations, all the fun, mayhem, excitement, etc.

But having that many messages per day has caused a lot more problems. For one thing, a person has to stay right on top of it. If you skip a day, there could be 160 messages to read! So one must call every day so as not to get swamped. And once you miss a day, you dread calling, because you know how long it will take to get through the whole message base. Then you keep putting it off for longer and longer. Also, the message base currently holds only 350 messages, which means the whole base could completely recycle in a week. So, put it off for too long, and you've lost your mail.

And having such a quick running base, many people who might normally get into reading and writing messages, won't, since it will take up a lot of their time. So, the very fact that my message base is popular keeps many people off it, meaning I only have about 10-15 people participating and that's on the good days.

If a board is used a lot, that means the equipment gets used a lot more. I've lost at least two disk drives since I started nearly two years ago, and the Political Forum BBS has gone though a number of hard drives.

And, of course, with success comes problem users. I know that they aren't restricted to just popular boards, but the more popular a board is, the more weirdos that find out about it and bug you. By 'problem' I'm talking about a few different kinds. The first weirdo I got was a user who called himself 'The Destroyer'. At that time, I hadn't even thought about people calling up and not using their real names. It never occured to me. So it was a new thing and I decided I didn't like it. So I told him to use his real name or nothing, and poof, he vanished. Since that time, I've had a few of them, surprisingly few had the intelligence to figure out what "Is that your REAL name?" meant. The ones that DID use their real name either were too stupid to follow directions, were pests to me (paging me 20 times in a row, etc.), were pests to others (writing stupid and offensive messages, etc.), and a few were both. The more popular you are, the more they find out about your place. Even got the occasional idiot who thought that, since we chatted once, we were now life long buddies and could call me voice anytime. (Advice to new SysOps: GET AN UNLISTED VOICE NUMBER!) Oh yes, and the hacker mystique. "Oh boy, I crashed Fletchers!"

Being successful means that people will like you, since they like your board, and will want to chat. I always enjoyed a good chat, especially with a new user or an old friend. So I didn't mind. But a person can only chat with so many people. Sometimes five people can page in a row and I for one don't like chatting THAT much! Some of these people never consider that maybe you're unable (or unwilling) to chat and will assume that you now hate them. A lot of these kids have no idea what they'll say to you until you break in, which usually makes for a boring chat.

Another thing on that basic subject: Eventually, your board will crash. That's a basic fact about running a BBS. And when it happens (and if people like your board), you will receive many calls from your loyal users wondering what happened and when it'll be back up. It may be a bit annoying, but it still is a LOT nicer to have users concerned and curious then to have them not care one way or the other.

Most of what I have mentioned about success has been negative. But besides the obvious niceness of being popular, you can get all sorts of help. On a couple of different occasions, the users complained about wanting stuff for the board (first more storage, than 1200 baud) and I said, "Ok, if you want it so badly, send me donations!" Now, if you run a board that no one cares one way or the other about, you won't get an old shoe! But when I needed $80 for an Avatex 1200 baud modem, I got it within a couple weeks! Not only that, but they kept sending! I ended up with $150 ABOVE the cost of the modem! With it, I gave my users (well, yea, and myself) an ST BBS. And believe me, there aren't many feelings greater than being loved by your people!

All of this basically shows that people care about your board. There are the obvious disadvantages, but knowing that, when you need help by way of a Co-SysOp or a few bucks or even a bit of moral support, your users will be there is a great feeling that I wouldn't trade for anything!

Randy

Atari Technical

YOUR FIRST XL/XE MODIFICATION
By Charles Cherry
Reprinted from ABACUS, August 87

You all know that I love to cut up my computers and solder in all kinds of weird things. To me the word hacker refers to violent physical activity. I know that not all of you feel the same way. You like computers that work. Well I've found the perfect modification for XL and XE owners to get their feet wet.

I was reading a letter to the Editor of Current Notes (the newsletter of the Washington (D.C.) area users) from Roger Tolbet of Ozark, Alabama. It seems he grafted a 1200XL keyboard into an 800XL and discovered the 800XL operating system supports the 1200XL function keys! "So what," I hear you say. "No one ever wrote any software for the function keys." True. But the function keys do some pretty interesting things all by themselves. Like controlling the cursor. No more holding down the control key. I immediately opened my brother's 256XL (formerly an 800XL), drilled four holes in it for push buttons, and wired them in.

It works like a charm. This is something I have to have. Guess what. It works on my 320XE (formerly a 130XE) too. Here's how to do it.

Get four small normally open push button momentary switches (Radio Shack 275-1547 - $2.69 for 4). Decide where you want to put them. I put them in a diamond shape above the CONSOL keys on my brother's XL. I put them on the side of my XE. Open up your computer and take off the metal RF shield. Install the buttons. Find U24 and U25 on the XL. I don't know the chip numbers on the XE, but they are easy to find. They are 16 pin chips and are near where the keyboard connector attached to the motherboard. They should say 4051 somewhere on them. Use the one closest to the front of the computer as U25 and the one behind it as U24. Wire the buttons as follows:

Button	U24	U25
Up	1	4
Down	12	4
Left	1	5
Right	12	5

(each button connects to both chips. One contact connects the indicated pin on one chip, the other contact connects to the indicated pin on the other chip.)

This is a real easy project and the rewards are great. I encourage you to try it. Give me a call if you need help (415-333-9519). Below is a section of page 202 from "Mapping the Atari" by Ian Chadwick. It explains the functions of the function keys.

96,97 60,61 FKDEF

The 1200XL has four redefinable function keys. FKDEF points (LSB/MSB) to their definition table—an eight-byte table for keys F1 to F4 and then SHIFT-F1 to SHIFT-F4. Each byte is assigned a value corresponding to an internal (not ASCII) code. The keys themselves are values 138-141 ($8A-$8D), but you must not assign a key its own value since it generates an endless loop. Initially points to 64529 ($FC11).

The function keys perform the following activities:

Key Combination	Function
F1	Cursor up (ATASCII 28; $1C)
F2	Cursor down (29; $1D)
F3	Cursor left (30; $1E)
F4	Cursor right (31; $1F)
With SHIFT	
F1	Home (cursor to upper left, 28; $1C)
F2	Cursor to lower-left corner (29; $1D)
F3	Cursor to start of physical line (30; $1E)
F4	Cursor to right end of physical line (31; $1F)
With CTRL	
F1	Keyboard enable/disable toggle (not console keys)
F2	Screen display enable/disable
F3	Key click sound enable/disable
F4	Domestic/international character set toggle

Function keys are ignored with both a SHIFT and CTRL combination. You cannot redefine CTRL-function key definitions.

ST

ST Notes
By LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Well, this month I'm going to get away from reviews again and simply give you some ST Notes...better known as tidbits of information!

How would you like to run High res applications on your color monitor? Or how about Low and Medium res applications on your monochrome monitor? A new product called the ST Video Box by the E. Arthur Brown Company claims to do just that for the low cost of $49.95!! No need to own two monitors AND an expensive switch box...just buy this clever gadget! Call 612-762- 8847 or 612-763- 6393.

Need a new printer? Lyco computer now has Panasonic 1080I's for $139.95! This printer offers NLQ printing in every mode including condensed! Lyco 1-800-233-8760.

Need to format a disk fast? How about 18 seconds for a single sided disk? Or 35 seconds for a double sided disk? Check out a PD program on Genie called FASTMAT uploaded by yours truly.

Well, it's short and sweet this month. So until next month...bye!

Software

ST-TRANSFORMER CONFERENCE
Excerpted from CompuServe by Permission

In a continuing series of live conferences on CompuServe, many topics and programmers are available for dialog with any CIS user. In mid-September, CIS offered one such CONFERENCE with DAREK MIHOCKA, author of the "ST-TRANSFORMER", the much discussed "ATARI 800 EMULATOR". What follows is a condensation of CompuServe's published recap, and is reprinted by permission.

Chairman: Thanks for joining us everyone. I would like to thank Darek Mihocka for joining us tonight. Darek is the author of the ST-Translator (The Atari 800 emulator).

DAREK: I'd like to first of all thank Dave Groves and Dan Rhea and Compuserve for inviting me to this conference. I'm grateful for this opportunity to be able to discuss the ST Xformer, since much of what has been written about it is heresay and not completely correct. There is a lot that I wanted to include in the ST LOG article that there just wasn't room for, so through this conference I hope that I can answer any questions anyone might have about the emulator, either in terms of using it, or playing around with the code. Questions?????

JEFF JONES: HOW COMPATIBLE IS IT?

DAREK: It'll run a lot. It doesn't support PM/G yet, so those programs won't too well. Programs that don't use PM/G are pretty compatible i.e. BASIC, MAC/65, BASIC XL, PAperclip, Ataiwriter, most public domain software, a lot binary files.

JEFF JONES: As far as machine code, how is its speed compared to the 800?

DAREK: The speed varies. Hold on. I'll send the specs through:
- 48K Atari 800 revision B operating system
- runs binary files and some cartridges - optional BASIC
- optional Fastchip operating system for faster BASIC
and access to the XL graphics modes
- all 17 graphics modes including GTIA
- most keyboard keys, console keys, and 2 joysticks
- has a DOS-like menu, to load and run binary files - the current directory is D1:, so you can get up to 800K on a floppy, or 20Meg on hard disk
- disk I/O of course is about 10 times faster
- vertical blank interrupts are at real time
- random number generator, 3 voices of sound and some other hardware locations are supported
- runs only on a color monitor
- comes with complete Megamax C source code and pages of documentation, subroutine descriptions and suggestions for improvements, if anyone wants to hack on it.
- C programmers may find the code useful since it contains many useful routines for the ST, like fast character plotting, writing your own keyboard handler, joysticks, etc.
- DOES NOT SUPPORT player missle graphics or horizontal blank interrupts. The speed would be too slow. Future version may have these 2 features, as well as monochrome support. It is not easier to put in than color, since you have to represent 128 colors using only 2! Like the CP/M emulator and PC Ditto, the speed is a lot slower than the real thing. The current version runs at about 25% the speed when executing pure 6502 code. The actual number varies considerably from program to program depending on the amount of screen I/O, disk I/O and whether you are using the Fastchip operaing system. You may get bursts where the program runs at 100% and other times at 5%.

JEFF JONES: I am just in awe at the amount of time that it would take to write.

MARK HOLMES: How well will graphics like games and such work on it? Like if I were to run Joust (800 version) on the emulator, would it have the 800-type graphics, or ST graphics, or what?

DAREK: Graphics are reproduced as closely as possible. All graphics modes are supported. The ST is not capable of reproducing all 256 8 bit colors, but I try to match it as closely as possible. You get about 60 different colors, out of 256.

Will P.: Darek, Would putting it in ROM help the speed any?

DAREK: nope. ROMs make no difference what so ever. The topic is discussed in the ST Log article.

Will P.: Well then,how big is this program?

DAREK: It's pretty small by ST standards. The ST Log version is about 45K long. The version I'm currently working on uses GEM so it's growing. The source code that will be published is about 160K long and is written in Megamax C. Should be lots of fun to anyone that loves to play with C!

Chairman: Darek, how soon can we expect the article?

DAREK: Well, you all know that Analog/ST Log has been a wee bit delayed for the last few months. It is in the September issue, but July/August just came out. I did receive my copy of it, so it should be pretty soon. 2 or 3 weeks probably. It'll be up here on Compuserve then.

MARK HOLMES: Are there any RAM locations that it specifically occupies? Like if I have a print spooler or desk accessory in memory, can one of those crash the program?

DAREK: It's relocatable, as with most .PRG programs. I've used it with different accessories, even ran it from within an accessory, so it should run on any color system.

MARK HOLMES: So you're saying it just uses the first available space it can find?

DAREK: Yes. If you load accessories first, there should be no problem.

bill a.: Is the Xformer strictly an 800 emulator, or can it "bank-switch" like an XE?

DAREK: The ST Log version is strictly a 48K computer. Bank switching may be an upcoming feature. What new features are added will depend on how much interest it generates with other programmers. It takes a long time to write all the various hardware emulation routines. I would think that bank switching wouldn't be trivial.

ROBIN M.: DAREK WHY DO YOU FEEL THERE HAS BEEN SO MUCH OPPOSITION TO THIS EMULATOR AND WHO HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE?

DAREK: There hasn't been too much opposition to this emulator. I got a lot of support form many users groups, software companies, and individual users. There are early versions of the emulator floating around and most people that have seen those liked them. They should enjoy the latest version quite a bit. The only opposition was from Atari Corp.

Will P.: I just wanted to say that I hope Atari has noticed that Commordore has a C64 emulator for the Amiga in the vaporware stage.

DAREK: I'd like to mention that if anyone has any questions about my Apple emulator, and /or other emulators, feel free to ask them.

Ron Kovacs: Over the last 5 months or so, we have read alot about your problems with Atari... What is your current situation with Atari Corp?

DAREK: The current situation. Ha ha. There doesn't seem to be one! Neil Harris gave me the OK to release the emulator about 2 months ago, and that was the last time I spoke to anyone there. However, I have heard that at CES he didn't have too many kinds words about me or the emulator. On GEnie, he called it a terrible program, and suggested that as soon as it comes out that "hackers" should fix it up. I'm not too pleased about his comments, but I think it only hurts Ataris image, considering the support I've received from everyone else.

Chairman: Darek, how long did it take you to write the emulator?

DAREK: I started the emulator over a year ago when I first bought the ST. My original intention, along with my partner Ignac Kolenko was to write a multi-processor emulator. i.e. 6502, Z80 etc. As it turned out, it was not trivial, so we narrowed it down to a 6502 emulator. We completed the Apple II emulator 2 days late for Compute's $10,000 programming contest (darn!) so I then too took my time writing the 800 emulator. I released a demo in January, and completed it in May. That's the versoin that will appear in ST Log. I've improved it a bit since.

Chairman: Thanks Darek, I always like some of the history of a project.

bill a.: You're including the source code for the Translator, and you said that further development depends in part on other programmers. Do you hope to include enhancements written by others in a future version?

DAREK: Yes. Perhaps if enough people join in, the idea of the multi-processor emulator might actually become reality. You have to understand that I wrote this for fun. I have a full time job at Microsoft Corp. (no boos please) and only have a few hours a day to work on it. I've tried to make the program modular (for other CPU's) and wrote about 50K of documentation for the ST log article. That will hopefully motivate some people to write modules for say, the VIC 20, Trash 80 Coco, PET, etc. There is a lot of software out for these machines, and it would be super if one machine (the ST) could run all that software. Sort of close the compatibility gap.

bill a.: Which did you prefer writing, the 800 emulator or the Apple version? And is <grin> the C=64 your next target?

DAREK: The actual Apple IC routines (after the 6502 engine was working properly) took 2 weeks. The Atari 800 hardware routines took 4 months. So I'll have to say the Apple IC was more fun. (It worked sooner!) By the way, to get the Apple IC emulator running, I only had to do 2 (yes two!) hardware locations. The Atari one has close to a hundred hardware registers and memory locations it has to support, just to get the word READY on the screen. eeeeh.

bill a.: <grin>

MARK HOLMES: do you have a list of programs that will NOT work (PM/G, etc)?

DAREK: I don't have a list. George and Jim at WACO have done most of the actual testing of the product. I personally dont have an 8 bit computer to compare it against. They have produced a video tape showing software running. Like I said before, forget PM/G for now. The remaining software works pretty well, even the CES robot demo and Atari's Christmas tree demo. I am currently trying to get Fujiboink to run. I live a block down the street from Xanth Computers, and was a bit embarassed in their store when Fujiboink wouldn't run (the sound comes out perfectly though!). They send me prorgams that don't run, and I try to make them run. I've has pretty good success so far. Don't forget: most games are COPY PROTECTED. If you can't copy it over to the ST, it won't run!

bill a.: Darek, are modified display lists supported even though DLIs are not?

DAREK: Yes. Any display list you can create is supported. It IS limited by the capabilities of the ST. The ST has a 200 scan line limit, so some very high screens get cut off on the bottom. Can't do much about that!

MARK HOLMES: does the emulator restrict the memory to 48k, or can the ST use the free memory as well? you said something about 48k only.

DAREK: No. It is limited to the 52K of memory available. It is equivalent to an 800XL with the Translator disk loaded. You can't just slap on 800K of extra memory. However, you can use the entire free memory as a large disk, so you can get an 800K D1: drive (and it is a LOT faster than the actual 810 drive).

Chairman: Darek, what is the biggest hurdle you see to add the player missle graphics?

DAREK: The PM/G routines are already in the code. They are pretty fast BUT, and the big BUT, the hard part is not drawing them, it is erasing them quickly. This required buffering screen memory, etc. and as you know, the ST has 32K of screen memory. This makes PM/G quite slow to erase, so the code is never called. But the code is there for anyone to think over.

bill a.: You said there was another 800 emulator being developed?

DAREK: Yes. A guy named David Jones is developing cartridge based versions of the Atari 800, C64 and Apple IC emulators. The cartridges will plug into the ST and allow you to hook up 810 drives directly. There is a demo of it in a few weeks at WACO It is being developed as a commercial product and should be ready in about 6 months.

bill a.: Hmm if it's a hardware product, will it let you used 8-bit cartridges?

DAREK: yes. And plug in your 8 bit ROMs. However the guts of his are very similar to mine, i.e. all graphics are emulated through software, not hardware, so it will not be too much faster, if at all, than mine. It will have the advantage of being able to load copy protected software directly off the 810. However, I don't know how commercially feasable it is. After all, the product will cost you as much as a real XE! Since the Xformer is 100% software, and is public domain, it has the advantage that it can emulate the various computers with no extra cost. Cartridge based emulators might end up costing as much as the real things.

Chairman: Darek, do you forsee going to assembly routines for more speed?

DAREK: The main guts are 100% machine langauge. The speed can't be improved. (too much). For example, PC Ditto runs at about 20% the speed of a real PC. That may not sound to great, but it isthe fastest that the 68000 can go, so it is a remarkable product. Much harder to write than mine.

Mowgli Assor: I was wondering, how are we supposed to GET the S/W there? I didn't notice a telecomm program included, so can we just download the S/W onto 3.5" disk via Xmodem?

DAREK: Since it is assumed that you will ONLY run unprotected P/D software (grin), you can download it very easily off any BBS that has 8 bit files, and Compuserve ATARI8 of course. If you have 2 modems, an ST and an 8 bit, you can copy over with Xmodem as you mentioned. The use a 30 foot long null modem cable at Xanth to transfer stuff over for me.

Mowgli Assor: OK. 2nd question - what is the front end for it? It looks like a Debugger/Disassembler.

DAREK: If yours looks like an Asembler, you either have the Apple][emulator or the January demo version. The front end of the real version looks like a DOS 2.0 menu. The current version under construction has a GEM based front end, to allow you to configure it easier.

Mowgli Assor: Hmmm, I have the Jan version & the Apple][thing. Where do I get the new vs?

DAREK: The new version will be included in the next (September) issue of ST LOG magazine, and will be public domain. That means it will be here on Compuserve very soon after the magazine comes out. I have agreed not to distribute it until then, since, understandably, ST Log wants to introduce it along with the article. I also preffer that, since it will mean nationwide distribution. If you depend on BBSs too much, files get "munched" along the way.

bill a.: I just wondered if you provide an R: handler so the emulator can access the ST's modem?

DAREK: No, there is no R: handler in the ST Log version. But I may put one in.

Chairman: Ok folks, thanks for joining us. End of formal CONFERENCE. "Bang Bang" "ouch" (darn.)

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL B.B.S

Atari News

compiled by John Nagy

The new 1200 baud ATARI SX-212 modem isn't even out yet, and FIXES are being passed around for it. Although it WILL come with a built-in 8-bit SIO cable port to enable you to plug it right into your daisy chain, it is a DEAD-END (only one port!). Enough of us whined about a separate "adaptor" package for the 8-bit that ATARI relented and put the port on. HOWEVER, SX-EXPRESS! from Keith Ledbetter is almost but not quite finished. It is reported that by using the R-VERTER HANDLER available in the public domain, that HOMETERM (and therefore, perhaps AMODEM and others) can be made to work.

DAVID SMALL of DATA PACIFIC was showing his latest MAGIC-SAC and DISK DRIVE ADAPTOR at the ATARIFESTS lately. He says that his latest software makes the ST MORE COMPATIBLE with MACINTOSH SOFTWARE than even the MAC II! Version 4.5 has automatic CRASH PREVENTION, recovering from even SOFTWARE BUGS before you can crash, hard drive support with separate MAC and ST partitions, and allows EPSON printers and Apple LaserWriter support. The new drive adaptor plugs into the drive loop and controls ALL drives online so as to be able to READ AND WRITE in MAC format. VERY nice, as copy protected MAC software can now join the list of SAC-COMPATABLE software. Projected price: $225. Projected availability: any time now. DATA PACIFIC, (303) 733-8158.

WordPerfect, the long awaited ST version of the top-rank IBM and MAC word proccessor, should ship in October. Since it does ANY and EVERYTHING, it is thought of as worth the HEFTY (by ATARI standards) price of $395. But STUDENTS are eligible for an equally hefty DISCOUNT, making the student cost only $99! Write to "EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT, WORDPERFECT CORP, 288 West Center, OREM, UTAH 84057" and ask for the student direct order form. Even when you get a form, you may have to WRITE-IN the ATARI ST version as your choice on the order, since the new forms are not ready yet. I would list some features to convince you all of just how good WordPerfect is supposed to be, but don't have the dozen pages to spare.

WHITEHOUSE COMPUTER, a big advertiser in many club newsletter and magazines, has reportedly closed and filed bankruptcy. The Williamsport, PA mail order house specialized in, amoung other things, ATARI software and supplies. Apparently there are over $200,000 worth of claims, and about $20,000 in assets at the closing. If you lost money to WHITEHOUSE, you can expect to hear from the lawyers with a "cents on the dollar someday" offer.

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Programming

C LANGUAGE COURSE
LESSON 3
by "R.S.", who has NOT been identified!

Publisher's note: This is the final lesson we have for this series. If anyone knows where they can find more, or who R.S. is, or would like to write further installments, let us know!

Arithmetic and C

The arithmetic operators in C are nothing strange if you are used to another computer language (they are almost always the same). Lets go over them:

```
+  addition
-  subtraction
*  multiplication
/  division
```

These should be obvious to you. C, in addition, has some other arithmetic operators:

% Yields the remainder of an integer division (modulo)

++ Adds one to the value of the variable to its right (prefix mode), or the value of the variable on its left (postfix mode)

-- That same as ++, but it subtracts one instead of adding

```
+= Same as sample1 = sample1 + x
-= Same as sample1 = sample1 - x
*= Same as sample1 = sample1 * x
/= Same as sample1 = sample1 / x
%= Same as sample1 = sample1 % x
```

The last five are a special case. Suppose you wanted to add three to the variable "test," the statement (using the special assignment operator) would look like this:

```
test += 3;
```

This makes the C code much shorter, but less harder to read. Lets add one more special assignment form. This one I call a multiple assignment statement. Suppose that you wanted to initialize four variables all to zero. Lets use the conventional form first:

```
test1 = 0;
test2 = 0; ... etc
```

In C there is a much easier method, like this:

```
test1 = test2 = test3 = test4 = 0;
```

In this statement, all four variables get assigned to zero. Here is an example using all of the above arithmetic operators:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    int sample1, sample2, sample3, sample4;

    sample1 = sample2 = 15;
    sample3 = 128;
    sample4 = 999;

    sample2 = sample1 * 15 / 2;
    sample1 = ++sample3 + 12;
    sample3 = sample4-- + 12 * (sample1 % 16);
    sample4 = sample1 * sample2 + sample3 -
sample4;
    sample2 += 19;
    sample1 -= sample4;
    sample3 *= -1;
    sample4 /= sample1;
    sample2 %= (sample3 + 16 * 2);

    printf("Sample1=%d\n", sample1);
    printf("Sample2=%d\n", sample2);
    printf("Sample3=%d\n", sample3);
    printf("Sample4=%d\n", sample4);
    printf("Sample1 Again=%d\n", sample1++ * 5 %
12);
}
```

A job that might keep you busy for a while would be to figure out what the output from this example would be. Before you attempt this, you should know about operator precedence in C.

The order of executing the various operations can make a difference, so C needs unambiguous rules for choosing what to do first. Each operator is assigned a precedence level. Here is a precedence list for the operators we have covered so far:

Operators (from high to low)

```
()
- (negative sign) ++ --
* / %
+ - (subtraction)
= += -= *= /= %=
```

What this means is that whatever is in parentheses, gets done first, then the negative sign and the increment and decrement operators. Multiplication, division, and modulo come next, then addition and subtraction, and last (but not least) the assignment operators. If two operators appear with the same level of precedence, they (in most cases) are evaluated from left to right.

If you are familiar with other high level computer languages, you should know about operator precedence.

Relational Operators

Now that we have discussed arithmetic operators, we can focus on relational (comparison) operators. This will also introduce you to making choices in C.

The following is a list of C relational operators:

```
<  less than
<= less than or equal to
== equal to
>  greater than
>= greater than or equal to
!= not equal to
```

Each comparative expression consists of a relational operator with a data name or arithmetic expression on each side. After the comparison, if the relation is true, the entire expression has the value of one. On the other hand, if the expression is false, the entire expression has the value of zero.

Here are some simple examples:

```
9 < 5  is true, and has the value of one

(15 - data) == data is false, and has the value of zero
```

Do not get confused between relational equality (==) and the assignment operator (=). They are two different birds, the first one tests for equality between the operand(s) on the left, and on the right. The second (the assignment operator), assigns the value on the right to the variable on the left. The difference between these two operators is the source of much confusion, and can cause some rather complex problems to appear.

Now lets try a programming example using relational operators:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
    int sample1, sample2;

    sample1 = 1;
    sample2 = 10;

    if (sample1 == 1)
       printf("Sample1 is %d\n", sample1++);
    else
       printf("Sample2 is %d\n", sample2--);

    if (sample1 <= sample2)
       printf("Sample1 is %d, Sample2 is %d\n",
sample1++, sample2--);
    else
       printf("Sample2 is greater than
Sample1\n");
}
```

This program basically has no purpose. Its function is to demonstrate the use of relational operators along with introducing C comparison statements (if, else).

The general form of the "if" statement is:

```
if (expression)
   true statement
[else]
      [false statement]
```

The expression must be enclosed in brackets. The entire expression will be evaluated and the statement following the "if" will be executed if the expression is true (one). If the expression is false (zero), one of two things will happen. If there is an "else" clause, the statements following the "else" will be executed. If no "else" appears within the entire "if," then all statements within the "if" will be ignored and the next statement following the "if" will be executed. If you are familiar with another high level language, you should have no problems with "if" and "else" in C.

Please take the time to note how I indent various structures in C. After a function name, every statement is indented at least three spaces. If you are within an "if" structure, the statements will also be indented. This indentation is not mandatory, but rather, it improves the readability of the source code.

Logical Operators

There are only three basic logical operators, so this should be easy. Here they are:

```
&& and
|| or
!  not
```

I will assume here that you know about George Boole and the concepts surrounding Boolean logic, and truth tables. Even if you don't, these concepts are very logical (pun intended).

Some Examples:

```
12 > 3 && 5 < 2              is true
!(12 > 3 && 5 < 2)           is false
16 > 5 || 19 < 10            is true
```

Normally, C does not guarantee which parts of an expression will be evaluated first. The exception to this rule is the way in which logical operators are evaluated. C guarantees that the expression will be evaluated from left to right. Whenever a sub-expression is found that invalidates the entire expression, or whenever the truth of the expression is known,

the evaluation stops. If this confuses you, here is a program fragment to clear things up:

```
number = 1;

if (number == 1 || number == 12)
   printf("Number is valid\n");
```

The second half of the expression (after the "or") is not evaluated at all because the truth of the entire expression is known.

Here is an example program using logical operators:

```
#include <stdio.h>
main()
{
   int sample1, sample2, sample3;

   sample1 = 0;
   sample2 = 1;
   sample3 = 5;

   if (sample1 && sample2)
      printf("Sample1 and Sample2 are greater
than zero\n");
   else
      if (!sample1)
         printf("Sample1 is zero\n");
      else
         if (!sample2)
            printf("Sample2 is zero\n");

   if (sample3 == 5)
      printf("Sample3 is %d\n", sample3);
}
```

I bet your thinking that I left out the relational operators in the first three "if" statements (unless you are familiar with this form). These cases are a special form of logical operations. Since "true" is assumed to be any non-zero value, the first "if" statement is actually asking the question:

```
if (sample1 != 0 && sample2 != 0)
   printf ...
```

On the other hand:

```
if (!sample1)
```

Is really asking the question:

```
if (sample1 == 0)
```

Since "not" (or false) is a zero value. As you can see, these forms of logical operations greatly decrease the amount of source code to be typed in. The trade-off is that, if you (or someone else reading the code) does not remember about this form, it could be confusing.

Exercise Time

Now that you have read your third C language course lesson, you should be able to answer these questions correctly.

1. Assume all of the variables in this question are "int." Find the "x" value for each of the following.

```
x = (9 + 16) * -5;

x == 12 + 6 / 16 * 5;

x = 19 * (7 > 5);
```

2. Find the error(s) in the following program.

```
#include "steio.h"
#define EH "Take off"
main()
)
   int i;
   float zip

   i = 2.5;

   printf("Program Start\n);
   +zip == 1 * 44;
   printf("%v", zip);
   printf("%s/n", EH);
{
```

3. Indicate whether the statements are true or false based on the value of the following variables.

```
c = 1;
d = 16;
e = 0;

(!c && e)
(c || !c)
(c = 0 && d > 12)
((!c && !e) || (d >= 16 && c == 1))
```

We have covered a lot of ground in this lesson. Yet to be discussed are programming loops in C, multiple statement blocks, and the complex issue of keyboard input (complex on the ST). However, this is the final chapter of this tutorial in the possesion of the Magazine editors, so would anyone like to take up the torch from here and write more? Let us know.

HEY! SUMMER'S OVER!
COME TO THE MEETINGS!

* * *

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Last Hacks

ERROR MESSAGES
Atari Never Told You About

Reprinted from The MACE Journal,
Vol.5 No.6

[After the mass firings in Sunnyvale when Jack Tramiel took over, certain documents marked "Top Secret" were found at a rest area on I-80 East. The MACE Journal is proud to be the first to present this valuable information to the world of Atari users. -ED]

Note: The following error messages result from external malfunctions, including operator error, and are only implemented on machines containing the experimental PSI (Pretty Small Integrated) chip. To determine if your machine has the PSIchip installed, set up a loop to read location 53770 ($D20A), the random number generator. Concentrate on a number between 0 and 255; if you can force the output of 53770 to equal your chosen number more than 87.4% of the time, you are one of the lucky few with the PSI chip.

ERROR 256 - Operator Negligence
You failed to stare intently at your 410 Or 1010 recorder during the entire CLOAD process. Rewind the tape to within .01mm of the original recording position, take a deep breath, and hold it while watching the tape grind through the recorder. It has been shown that blinking during a cassette load can set up shock waves sufficient to knock the tape head out of alignment and abort the load.

ERROR 257 - Keyboard Adhesion error
There is peanut butter or some other sticky substance underneath your keycaps. (This error does not occur on Atari 400's with the original membrane keyboard.) You can try to pry off the keycaps yourself and clean up the mess, or face ridicule by bringing your machine to the service department of your local computer store.

ERROR 258 - Disk Damage Error
Your toddler has been trying to play your disks on his Fisher-Price Record Player. This error can also occur when disks have been used as Frisbees, coasters, or to jimmy a lock.

ERROR 260 - TMF Error
A Transient Magnetic Field has erased all of the data on your disks and/or tapes. You are now the owner of 253 flat black plastic squares which can be used (with little success) to tile your rec room floor.

ERROR 261 - Release Data Shock
A previously-announced Atari product has been released on time: the shock was too much for your computer, which will be inoperative for the next three months, thereby bringing things back to normal.

ERROR 262 - Poor Programming Technique
You have aggrivated your BASIC cartridge by writing "spaghetti code", full of tangled GOTO statements. In retaliation, it has renamed all of your variables as carriage returns (CHR$(155)). No recovery possible.

ERROR 263 - Late Night Error
This error most often occurs at 4 am and is due to the fact that the computeris being put to sleep by your yawns. Grinding No-Doze between the cartridge and its connectors will prevent the error, as it will totally disable your system and you will be able to gets lots of sleep in the next few months while you are waiting for your machine to be repaired.

ERROR 264 - Fed Detected
The FBI informant has tapped into your phone line and is monitoring your private downloads. For $59.95 (plus $2.00 shipping and handling) you can buy an Honesty Chip which will immediately switch the transmission to a public domain program. The Honesty Chip is available from I. M. Cott, Cell Block 534, San Quentin, CA 94013.

ERROR 265 - CUI Error
The operator is guilty of Computing Under the Influence of prescribed substances. Power down and wait for operator detoxification before attempting further operation.

ERROR 266 - Malfunction Timeout
It has been too long since an error has occured, so the Error Generator, ERRGEN, at location 49155 ($C003) has chosen to spice up your life. This error is seldom seen because of the unlikelyhood of operating your computer for more than 15 minutes without an error.

"We don't have your system designed yet, but I brought along what we have."

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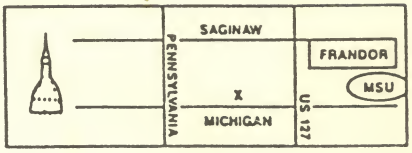

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Atari News

...and COMMENT by John Nagy

ATARI STOCKWATCH: Surviving BLOODY MONDAY and the aftershock, ATARI stock is at this writing at $6.50, down by more than half of only a month back. Still, it nets out to over 10% growth in the year since ATARI went public, and we all expect at least SOME recovery of the market. However, ATARI's purchase last month of FEDERATED electronics stores with excess onhand capital may prove to have been ill-timed, as massive stock market downturns generally result in reduced consumer spending... and had ATARI waited, FEDERATED might have been a real STEAL about now.

PRODUCTS: Actually shipping. A MAM subscriber obtained an SX-212 modem from COMPUTABILITY a few weeks ago... but still no 8-bit software. MEGAs are showing up, but still mostly leaked-out DEVELOPERS models. The MEGA may be the best sales tool ever for the 1040ST... with the 16% program failure rate due to new ROMS and the MEGA price ($2,000), the 1040ST is getting a surge of popularity making it VERY hard to find now. NOT shipping yet: the ATARI PC, the LASER PRINTER, the 8-bit disk drive.

NEW PRODUCTS ANNOUNCED, take 8,976... We mentioned the Compact Digital Disk ROM device ATARI plans to have out "soon" ($650!), now heres two more:

* A 10-MIP (million instruction per second) UNIX-like graphics workstation for under $5,000. It should be shown at the winter COMDEX show, and is hoped for production in mid '88 for marketing initially in the ATARI-favorable atmosphere overseas. The price is high to us home-types, but DRAMATICALLY below anything similar available today.

* The IBM HARDWARE EMULATOR BOX for the ST is on the front burner again at ATARI. If released, it will likely be FASTER than a normal CLONE and perhaps more versitile than the PC:DITTO package. Still, PC:DITTO is hard to beat at the price.

Minor bugs are getting full and fast attention from PC:DITTO folks at AVANT-GARDE. The incredable $89 IBM emulation software for the ST is known to run EVERYTHING any CLONE can, but doesn't like some CLONE DOS's (ZENITH, PC's LIMITED, BLUE CHIP, HITACHI). Formatting a virgin disk in IBM form also generates an error. And, the current version only supports COLOR MONITORS. Patches and fixes are being distributed, with an UPDATE scheduled for late this year that should also give MONOCHROME support. AVANT-GARDE, 381 Pablo Point Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32225. (904) 221-2904.

DATA PACIFIC, makers of the MACINTOSH EMULATOR (MAGIC SAC), has had problems with BAD CHIPS, stalling the expected October release of the TRANSLATOR ONE, a device to allow normal ST disk drives to read MACINTOSH disks. DATA's DAVID SMALL is smoking (as are the ruined circuit boards) but hopeful that not much more time will be lost.

Speaking of EMULATORS, DAREK MIHOCKA's ST-TRANSFORMER (8-bit ATARI emulator for the ST) is now being circulated in the public domain, and getting much better reviews now that the MORE COMPLETE version is being seen and tested. Expect more development, as interest is just as high as we expected.

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CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS

M.A.M. this Month

Editors:
Rich and Judy Barnes (517) 349-0513

Inside MAM: THE CLUBS- PAGE
C.H.A.O.S. (LANSING) 5
G.A.G. (FLINT) 8
B.C.A.U.G. (BATTLE CREEK) 10
G.K.A.U.G. (KALAMAZOO) 11
G.R.A.S.S. (GRAND RAPIDS) 12
W.A.U.G. (ANN ARBOR) 13
T.A.G. (SAGINAW/TRI CITIES) 14

FEATURES:
ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT COVER
ID'ing 5.25" DISK MANUFACTURERS 13
ZENIA BARCODE READER REVIEW 15
800 vs XL VIEWPOINT 16
BASIC LEARNING GUIDE 17
BIRTH OF COMPUTERS? 18
GFA COMPANION REVIEW 19
MAGIC SHOW VIEWPOINT 20
INDUS AND CPM (8-BIT) 21
ST NOTES with LEROY VALLEY 22
RUNNING A BBS - EXPOSED! 24
ST FOR BEGINNERS BOOK REVIEW 26
FCC TELECOM RATE REPORT 25
MEGA PROGRAM FAILURE LIST 28
FUNSTUFF - FLOWCHART PUZZLE 29
HACKS' LAST HACKS 30

ADVERTISERS:
CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS 2
COMPUTER EMPORIUM 7
MARS MERCHANDISING 9
SHUBERT CORPORATION 31
COPY QUICK BACK COVER

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

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Publisher's Note

by JOHN NAGY
(517) 487-5646

Breaking up is hard to do...

HA! But really, it is. This is the last issue of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE that will be published by the original Lansing crew. I was one of the few C.H.A.O.S. club members that got the ball rolling that ultimately became what you have in your hands now... And it's NOT easy to let go.

But the time has come. Burnout is more than a future threat- it is here. Better to turn things over to an enthusiastic new group before the project advances past the "burden" stage and on into the "pain" stage. Especially since such an entusiastic group is NOW presenting itself; this opportunity might not come again soon!

Beginning with the DECEMBER 1987 issue, MAM will be the adopted child of BILL and PATTY RAYL, members of both WAUG (Ann Arbor) and MACE (Detroit). On their adgenda is a proposed merger with the MACE JOURNAL and possible incorporation of GLASS (Detroit's ST club) and, with any luck, CACE (Jackson)(again). A circulation of over 1,500 is possible.

So, expect CHANGES. What you have seen so far has been largely MY vision of what MAM should be... with new management comes a new vision. I hope that all member clubs will be as supportive and as outspoken about the magazine with Patty and Bill as they have been with me. (YIKES! How's that for a mixed message?!)

As for me, I will now actually have time to WRITE more than a few lines and compilations for the magazine, as I have a stack of clippings and notes for MANY articles that have been patiently awaiting their turn... so you haven't seen the last of me.

This MAM project has been one of the most satisfying (and time consuming), educational (and frustrating), and creative jobs I have ever had. I am happy to have have done it; I am at once happy and sad to pass it to another. Long may it grow and prosper.

* * * *

While pondering my own history in CHAOS and MAM, I also recollect the final moments of other ATARI (and other) CLUB officers I have known. The symptoms of BURNOUT form a relatively standard set of events and attitudes that merit comment. Here's a typical and non-comprehensive review:

1. Only people who BURN can BURN OUT. The occasional volunteer (OH TO BE ABLE TO KEEP MY HANDS IN MY POCKETS AND MY WORDS IN MY MIND!) somehow knows his (her) limits and can say NO when it is appropriate. Others are habitual DOERS that can't let things slide.

2. Real DOERS can't just do ONE THING for a club. The Librarian becomes the SYSOP/Librarian, then the President/SYSOP/Librarian. The Treasurer adds the publications co-ordinator duties. The editor becomes the Vice President. More and more, fewer and fewer people do more and more jobs.

Condition 2 above has several results:

3. Things GET DONE. Prosperity and MOVEMENT mark the early stages of the consolidation of jobs in the small, active, resposible, enthusiastic group.

4. "Regular" members get used to watching the progress, usually quite pleased at the results. They volunteer less since, after all, the DOERS know what needs to be done, and are doing great.

5. The DOERS get used to making decisions for the group. It is only natural that the ones doing the bulk of the work should determine not only HOW to do it, but WHAT to do next. In fact, the "regulars" will encourage the DOERS to use their own judgement, and not bother them with trivial votes, etc.

6. More praise and recognition is given to the DOERS for remarkable accomplishments. The DOERS realize that they individually are making the club a success. At about this point, practices within each division of activity are becoming familiar enough to become ritualistic.

7. What were once exciting challenges become everyday duties for the DOERS. The thrill may be gone, but it is replaced with pride and confidence.

8. Eventually the constant run of duties becomes a perceptable drain. Tasks that once kept the DOER up all night in creative frenzy now wait for a night with nothing really good on TV. After all, this is a volunteer job, right?

9. Things slow down for the club. Some things go out late. Some never happen at all. The DOERS get mad because nobody seems to want to help. The membership isn't used to having to help. The membership isn't pleased to be bawled out for being "regular" members.

10. Stirred by the bawlings and seeing an opening, some new people come into the ranks of the DOERS, eager and inexperienced. The DOERS have little patience with this, and even less interest in changing anything from the way they have developed so succesfully.

11. Resentment becomes the new bylaw of the organization. DOERS think they are being pushed or replaced with incompetent newcomers, or else they think that nobody cares about what they are doing enough to become involved. The new DOERS get disillusioned by the resistance from the old DOERS and either revolt or retreat. The "regulars" begin to drop out, because they see no movement, because they dislike the "elitest" attitude of the officers, or in order to avoid being assailed by the DOERS.

Finally,

12(a). The original DOERS resign, disappointed to see that support just "wasn't there anymore" for what was once, after all, a GREAT club...
(or)

12(b). The Club folds up.

Now this scenario sounds pretty grim, but it is and has been the fate of a number of our sister clubs and organizations. It isn't always this way, of course. We have the power to recognize ourselves in one of these stages and redirect ourselves to a different outcome.

I think I have spotted a singular common indicator of IMMINENT BURNOUT: When an officer (or director) simultaneously complains about too much to do, but refuses to allow others to help in THEIR OWN ways. That's STAGE 9 or even 10, and the end may be near.

For myself, I see that I must retreat from a DIRECTOR to a PARTICIPANT while I still can enjoy participation. As much as it will tug at me to volunteer both advice and effort on each and every project the club takes on, I will have to meter my involvement. Other officers will have to arise from the "regulars", and they will have to make their own policy and procedures. I won't like them all, but not everyone liked all of mine, either.

It is a hard lesson for a DOER, and one that goes against reason: Often the only way to assure that a job is done, or even to determine if it needs to be done at all, is to NOT volunteer for it.

Not everything NEEDS to be going smoothly in a club... not every project HAS to be a roaring success... not EVERY owner needs to be IN the club... for the club to be an active, fun, and profitable part of every member's life.

None of this should be taken as a discouragement to people who have and will put massive efforts into their clubs. Without them, the really GREAT things that some of our ATARI clubs have accomplished would simply never have been possible. But beware courting BURNOUT. You may burn more than just yourself!

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C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

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General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF CHAOS

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treasur.	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr.	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
XL/XE Librian.	Bill Johnson	675-7166
Publ. Librarn.	Richard Evans	351-2381
ST Publ. Libr.	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Cor.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coordn.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Lewis	339-1793
Newsltr Editor	Rich Barnes	349-0513
Advertising	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential Address

By Leo Sell

First of all, I believe I have been remiss with some thank yous!! A note of thanks is due the people who helped with the Magic show earlier this fall. Thanks to everyone who donated the use of equipment, time and effort. Thanks also for the good work in making up show disks, et al. Another special note of thanks to Guy Hurt for all of his work again this year in assisting with the Auction. And thanks to all of you who bought and sold. Lots of hard work, time and fun was had by all.

On the news front, we have a new 8-bit Publications Librarian: Innaiah Pothacamury, 332-0558. Thank you Richard Evans for your YEARS of hard work and service. And thanks to Innaiah for taking over.

The other major news is a slight increase in club dues. Dues will be $15.00 per year after the January SIG meetings. Renew by January 16, 1988 and save $3.00. Get your nonmember friends to join too!! Other changes are under way and we will need you to help us out. This is your club...make it work for you...

Meeting Minutes

8 - Bit Minutes
by Gary Ferris

October brought the CHAOS annual auction and it was was a wild one indeed. Buyers found excellent bargains and sellers got part of their invesment back on items they no longer needed. As usual Malcolm Cleveland was the big buyer (tell him it's a bargain and you can sell him anything). The club treasury is almost $300 richer as a result.

OCTOBER ST-UTTERINGS
by Brian Goluska

Even though we are not committed to having a monthly ST disk of the month (DOM), Sally Nagy put together a whiz of a disk for October. For general usage, it has a desk accessory for copying or formatting disks from the desktop (have you ever run out of space to save a file on disk, with nothing but unformatted blanks around?). Then a public domain spelling checker, not interactive, but a nice stand alone program that will spell-check a text file that was created by other programs. Third was a financial package written in GFA Basic that provides all the necessary calculations - loan amortization, cost basis, future value of investment, etc. This looked like a conversion/duplication of an earlier Atari basic financial package.

Most impressive on the DOM was a slideshow of pictures made with the commercial SPECTRUM 512 program. These pictures show 512 simultaneous colors on the ST monitor. On the lower resolution TV screens, these pictures were still impressive. (Note: Published ads for SPECTRUM 512 say that it will not work on machines made before 12/85, without an MMU chip upgrade. The slideshow program does indeed fail on my oldest 512, although it runs fine on my other machines.)

Discussion at the meeting covered experiences with mail order vendors, along with speculation on Atari's new marketing strategies. Rumor has it that Atari is stiffening requirements for stores carrying Atari's, and that the Mega will not be sold mail order. Local sales and support for Atari has been weak for years, and we've always wanted more stores to carry Atari.

Other commercial software demonstrated at the meeting included Pinball Factory, a pinball machine construction and play game, and Airball, a maze game in which the player is a rolling bubble.

See ya at the next St meeting of CHAOS.

Disk Library

ST LIBRARY By Sally Nagy

Come one, come all to our November ST meeting and see the new ST Xformer be put through the paces. It will be our DISK OF THE MONTH. On the disk besides the files that make the Xformer work will be some PD Software that works with it.

New disks this month are as follows:

UTILITIES B19, PROLOG Interpreter. Grab the book, "Programming in Prolog" by Clocksin and Mellish and try it out. There are some docs on the disk BUT they are written in GERMAN. IF SOMEONE CAN HELP IN TRANSLATING THESE IT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP! PLEASE CONTACT ME.

UTILILIES B20, GFA BASIC Tips and Programs.

UTILITIES C18, DISKMECH a powerful disk analyzing, archiving, and editing tool, it has a sector editor, format editor, and more! FILETOOL an accessory that gives gem options for disk options. A New ARCshell which is very small in size but very powerful, and some other FILES.

UTILITIES C19, SUPERBOOT an "all in one" booting program, THEMENU a disk cataloger with a GEM menu of options, FKEYLAB which produces labels for the Function keys, and more...

UTILITIES D2, NOW has the NEWEST version of STWRITER version 2.3 which works on the MEGA ST's. I hope this is the last version for a while.

UTILITIES E4, PUBLISHING PARTNER PRINTER DRIVERS - This disk is also re-worked. If you are looking for a driver check this one out. A new disk is being created with some fonts, etc.

GRAPHIC DISPLAY 12, Features Spectrum 512 pictures....

GRAPHIC DISPLAY 13, MORE Spectrum pictures, Ageis cartoon and misc. demos

GRAPHIC DISPLAY 14, Features Omaha -- a demo of a new card game.

More new files are coming in each week. If you want to see some type of file or files that I am not getting please let me know and I will try and get it. These disks are to be a resource and service to you. Bye now until next month.

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Presidential Address

by Jerry Cross

Gee, my first presidential responsibility. Trying to come up with enough stuff to fill our page of the newsletter. And trying to fill the shoes of Jim! (Gulp!). Well, I promise to do my very best and try to make our club as well known as Chaos or Mace, or maybe even JACG or PACE!

But my first responsibility is to the members of our club. To help me with this job, I have a big favor to ask. I will soon be sending each GAG member a survey. I need to know what you want out of your Atari, your club, and your newsletter. What sort of equipment do you own? What do you plan to buy? Where do you shop for computer programs? Do you use mail order companies? Please fill it out and add any comments you wish. I need to know what you like and dislike about the club. What can we do to improve it? These results will be compiled and shared with other clubs, companies, and Atari themselves!

Also, this is a good opportunity to nag you. But I won't. It seems that every newsletter I have read contains the usual stuff about the members not pulling their weight. You know the line..."This is YOUR club, and if you want it to succeed then YOU have to help out". But I'm not going to do that. While other clubs complain about members not bringing in programs to demonstrate, I not going to. I won't even nag you about writing articles for the newsletter. I'm sure you have programs you enjoy, or knowledge you could share, or hardware you could review, but I don't want to pester you into writing one. You are probably too busy anyway.

All I ask is you make yourself available to answer questions, and attend the meetings. In the past few months our club has signed up several new members. They are looking for help with their computers. They have searched all over Flint for books, and can't find any. The local computer store do not specialize in the Atari and are hard pressed to answer specific questions. So these members come to our meeting (and read our newsletter) looking for answers. I still remember when I joined GAG, and just by listening to other people talk at the meetings, I learned a whole lot. But if only 10 or 15 people show up at the meetings, you don't really learn that much.

I also realize that coming to meetings just to listen to people talk gets awful boring. It would help if someone would demonstrate a program or hardware once and a while. The officers can only come up with so many articles and demo's before they get burned out. Gil is running out of ideas (after 3 years!) and would welcome some help. There is no telling how long I will last.

Anyway, one of the things we are now offering our members is a rapidly growing magazine/book library. We now have a subscription to several 8-bit and ST monthly magazines (with disks), and will loan them to you for one month. We have also received a large number of Abacuss books, mostly concerning the Atari ST. As our club expands, we will look into buying hardware to lend out, such as modems, printers, and disk drives.

Our p/d library is now one of the best in the country. We now receive orders from all over the country (about 2 a week), and it is improving all the time. Our new librarian, Jim Tuma, will continue to add new programs as quickly as we can find them.

I guess I should get down to club business. I think most of the page is filled by now...Here are the results of the October elections. Jerry Cross: President, Dave Pettit: Vice President/ST, Matt Howe: Vice President/8-bit, Jim Tuma & Ed Kalushe:8-Bit Librarians, Gil Merciez and Jack Keeme:ST Librarians, and Nick Klak: Magazine Librarian. Lets give these folks as much support as possible.

Our club now has a post office box. Any request for disks, catalogs, or information should now be sent to: Genesee Atari Group PO Box E Flint, MI 48507.

We will soon be investigating the possibility of buying products on a group purchase plan.

If you have any recommendations, please contact one of the officers.

FACTS BBS has now moved to an Atari ST. It will support the usual Atari line, plus IBM, Mac, and Commodore/Amiga. It can use your support also! If you have any questions about the Atari, most of the club officers regularly log-on and can quickly help you out.

In the near future, you will be seeing changes in the format of the newsletter. I need to know what you would like to see, what you liked about the old newsletter, and what you want changed.

That's about it for this month. Don't miss the November meeting. We will be showing a video tape of highlights of the Atari Magic show, plus a look at a real live (?) Mega-4. Please try to make it!

Genesee Atari Group

Next Meeting
November 11, 6:30pm Neithercut

Genesee Atari Group is a non- profit user group based in Flint, Michigan. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut school, 2010 Crestbrook, Flint MI (6:30pm). We also have a 4th Saturday session during the school year at 10 am.

Confused by technical jargon, Jeff attempts an upload.

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bundled with PC DITTO $299.95

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Next Meeting Nov. 12
VO-ED Center, 475 E. Roosevelt

Meeting Minutes

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES
by Chuck Steele

We had much discussion about about the News letter or lack of the News letter. Several members were upset that we aren't getting the MAM on time. Several members have missed several issues altogether. Dennis made a motion that we give the News letter a few more months so see if there is an improvement. So it was voted that we re-evaluate our association with M.A.M. at the January meeting.

M.A.M. has decided to start publishing the magazine in Ann Arbor starting with the December issue. Hopefully the problem of receiving our News letter after the meeting will be corrected with the Ann Arbor group. They are also talking about changing the price back to $.50. Such a popular idea, are they running for political office?

The October meeting was moved back one week to give more time to get the M.A.M. before the meeting. This got people upset. So we voted to have all future meeting on the second Thursday of each month. This means that our meetings can occur as early as the 8th of the month. Working backwards, this means the M.A.M must be mailed by the 1st of the month, and the paste ups should be to the printer 8 to 10 days before that.(which would be the between the 21st and 23rd of each month.) That leaves a three or four day window for the editor to get his paste ups done, as the dead line for the clubs is the 18th of each month.

Joe has received her new SX212. The modem was shipped without cables and without software. Atari is selling these items separately?? The SX is a 300/1200 baud modem, which follows the HAYES Smart commands, except a few autodial features. Joe hasn't had a chance to use her new modem yet. Lets hope ATARI starts shipping the modem ready to run with software and cables.

Tom and Dan have finished copying the new disks for the library. The new library listing should be out before you receive this. If you haven't received your new library listing, then please call me. Just a reminder about the new rules of the library. If you want a disk out of the library, call Dan Egan or Tom Siemietkowski before the meeting. They will make you a copy which you can pick up at the meeting. Cost of each disk will be one dollar. Starting next month the Disk of the Month will also be $1.00. I encourage each of you to take advantage of our excellent library. You just can't beat the value for the price.

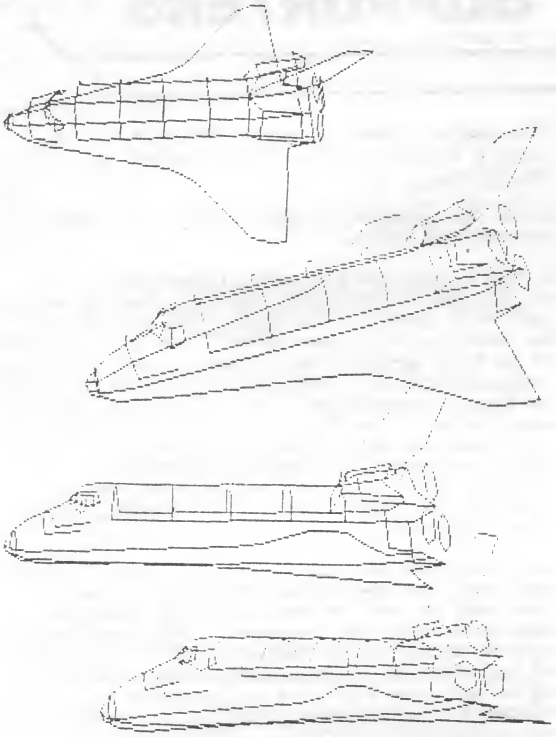
Dennis suggested that membership dues of each member be at the same time. Now the membership dues occur on each members anniversary date. If we adopt this system all members would pay there dues the same month. The advantage of this system is that the membership chairman could easily keep track of who has paid. It simplifies his job and all members know that their dues are due at the September meeting for instance. As new members join they would pay on a pro-rated bases for only the months remaining until the next September. The negative part of this would be a change over period that we would have to go through. We tabled this motion until the November meeting. So come and be prepared to vote. Remember as a BCAUG citizen you have the right to VOTE.

We had a really fast Demo of the Happy. The Happy goes into Turbo speed on reading and writing. It is really fast. It allows you to write to disk without a notch. Several switches and an L.E.D. are added to the front of the 1050 disk drive. These switches allow you to run the Disk drive at normal speed or warp speed, Scotty. The other switch allows you to write to the back of the disk or not. Dan says he has been able to back up all his software.

Tom's Doubler has had problems. He isn't real happy with the way it has worked or should I say not worked, and wasn't able to do a demo of the disk drive. He had to return the first kit as it had a defective chip, and now he is still having problems. It appears that the reliability of these upgrade kits is a big big factor. Thanks to Dan and Tom.

Dan also had an interesting demo program that explained CPR. We also had the DOM. See you at the next meeting and may your BITS all be happy ones.

[Editors note: These graphics were sent to MAM by B.C.A.U.G. President CHUCK STEELE for use in the AUGUST issue, but arrived too late. As we now have room, here they are... refer to the last two issues of MAM for discussion of the SUPER STATE 3-D program used to create thes figures on an ATARI 8-bit machine.]



SUPER STATE 3-D

Several Views of one
3-D File, the SHUTTLE

B.C.A.U.G. OFFICERS:

CHAIRMAN:	
Chuck Steele	964-1701
LIBRARIAN:	
Todd Harris	965-5354
NEWSLETTER:	
Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475
SECRETARY:	
Mike Engle	964-3033
TREASURER:	
Josephine Yeager	968-8401
MEMBERSHIP:	
Dennis Martin	962-1024

GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

by Daniel Youngs

October's meeting was a Great One!! Alan Lemin brought in his ST and Keyboard, Showing us how MIDI is used. It was a real neat experience. I think that the ST is doing to the music industry the same that the Mac did to desk top publishing.

The new info from our last meeting was:

*BBS as been up and running for over a month and has not crashed once.

*Our next meeting will be on desk to publishing for the 8bit and ST (if we can get an ST). We have several people bring in different printers to compare. We will be demonstrate several programs also.

*I will start my demonstration on Syncalc and Snyfile. I have found a way to transfer Data Perfect files to Synfile so you can convert your old Data Perfect disks.

*We will be looking for new officers to fill the spots left by leaving officers(President for one). We will be talking more about this at the next meeting.

*We are thinking about have a hardware software swap meet if this would interest anyone please let us know. (maybe in December).

*Our next meeting will be November 12 at Dewing Hall. Starting time will be 11:00, see you there.

GKAUG meets once a month on the second Saturday, the starting time is 11:00. Location, Dewing Hall at Kalamazoo College.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL B.B.S

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meetings

Wyoming Library
3350 Michael S.W.
First Wed. of the Month
Informal meeting: 6:30-8:00
Formal meeting: 8:00-9:00

Presidential Address

President George Nosky
2440 Parkridge S.E.
Grand Rapids MI 49506
616 942 1527

Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville MI 49333
616 795 7373

MEETING NEWS

The meeting was caled to order at 8:00 P.M. by Pres. George Nosky. After the usual reports from the treasurer ect. the discussion centered around what direction the membership would like to see GRASS take. Several ideas were brought up.

1. An Atari fair, possibly at the library.

2. A membership inventory. This would provide members with a source of help to solve problems.

3. Election of officers, we need a nominating committee.

4. Demonstrations at meetings. Several members volunteered?? (they didn't even see the train).

5. Library expansion.

6. Christmas party.

The meeting ended at about 8:55 due to the closing of the library. Ideas seemed to still be coming.

After the membership meeting the board met to discuss the ideas.

1. Atari fair. George and I talked about this at the end of the board meeting. George will call Atari and ask for help. The library will be contacted for open dates. The current idea is to have 10-12 members display their hardware and software on a Saturday. This will have to be heavily advertised. We would like to see everything in the 8bit line from an 800 with joysticks and cartridges hooked to a T.V. to 130's with monitor, multiple disk drives, printer, modem etc. We will probably need a chairman for this project. Call George if you are interested.

2. Membership inventory. We gave George all of our ideas for questions and he will do a draft. This will be sent to the board for additions, deletions, and rearrangement. The questionnaire will be mailed to all members. After the info is collected it will be compiled and printed. It is our hope that this will facilitate hardware and software solutions and answers for our members.

3. Election of officers. We still need a nominating committee.

4. Demos. The feature of the November meeting will be a demo of templates for speedcalc. We have this program in the library and hope to add the templates to the disK. At the December meeting we will see a demo of Atariwriter+. There are no plans for the balance of the year at the present time but we hope to have a demo at every meeting. This necessitates starting the formal part of the meeting at 7:30 instead of 8:00. This may give us more time for discussion and questions and answers.

5. Library expansion. We hope to get the library from CHAOS to add to our club library. Details will be finalized at the November meeting. It looks like we will try to pick up the CHAOS library at their meeting in Nov. and

then several members will meet at my house for a day to dupe the library. We may also add things from Ron's library to ours.

6. Christmas party. Not much interest so the idea was dropped.

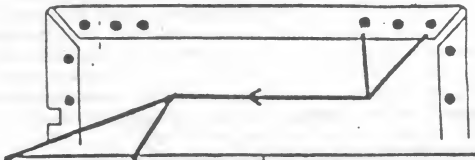
Pirating of programs was also discussed. It is suspected that this may be happening. We see several happy drives etc. Of course NO ONE IS USING THEM ILLEGALLY. The GRASS policy is that the club doesn't condone the copying of copyrighted materials.

If you want something from our library I will have a form for you to fill out and then I will make a copy for you. You can still make copies your self. The cost of copies from the library is $1.50 if I make them. This is payable in advance.

I was impressed with George's organization of the meeting. I hope we can get him to continue in the office of president.

The board was impressed and delighted with the many ideas that you had. We hope they can be carried out and we will work to see that they are.

IDENTIFICATION OF 5¼" DISKS



SEAL	COMPANY	COMMENTS
• • •	MAXELL	
COMPLETE SEAL	MEMOREX	ALSO ALBINAA (BEST CO.)
• •	VERBATIM	
• •	NASHUA	6 dots down each side
	BASF	
	ELEPHANT	
	3M	2 bars down each side
	WABASH	6 sets of 8 sqs. per side
	FUJI	
	CONTROL DATA	STORAGE MASTER
	SYNCOM	3 bars down each side
• •	CERTRON	8 dots down each side
• •	BONUS	
	IDM	4 dots down each side

THIS CHART SHOWS THE NAME OF THE MANUFACTURER WHO MAY HAVE PRODUCED THAT DISKETTE YOU NOW HAVE IN YOUR DISKETTE DRIVE. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE N.O.V.A. USERS GROUP OF VANCOUVER, WA. FOR THIS CHART PRINTED IN THEIR NOV. ISSUE.

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

The Washtenaw Atari Users' Group is devoted to promoting an interchange of ideas and information concerning Atari micro-computers. Our goal is to aid our members in achieving maximum enjoyment from their investment in Atari computer products. We do this through information in our newsletter and by our monthly meetings. Each meeting focuses on one topic of interest, with program demonstrations and question and answer sessions for both 8-bit and 16-bit machines.

How to Contact WAUG!

Clear Thinking: (313)761-2444
(300/1200 baud)
Molin's Den: (313)420-0407
(300/1200 baud)
Treasure CheST: (313)439-2816
(300/1200 baud)

BY MAIL: WAUG!

3487 Braeburn Circle
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

List of Future WAUG! Activities

Nov. 10: Graphics/Printers
Dec. 8: MidiMaze Fun Night

In Person: Come to a meeting! WAUG! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 PM. Meetings are held in Room 2228 of the University of Michigan School of Education, located on the corner of South and East University in Ann Arbor.

By Mail: Send a check for $10, payable to Bob Carlini (our Treasurer), to the WAUG! mailing address. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number. Please include information about your system and interests. Benefits of WAUG! Membership WAUG! members receive the club newsletter, keeping them informed about what's going on in WAUG! and the whole Atari community. Members also have access to the 8-bit and ST disk libraries. These disks are jam-packed with useful and entertaining public domain software. Members pay the special club rate of $2 for 8-bit and $3 for ST disks, and disks may be purchased in person or by mail. The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners.

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING: The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

November 14, 1987
December 12, 1987

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Joe Manelis	ST Disk Lib.	790-0993
George Stuart	News Letter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You an get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8- bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Letter from the Prez

By now all of you know that there was no October meeting. I apologize, but the library didn't inform us that they were installing new carpet until one week before the meeting. I tried to move it back one week, but the library didn't finish it's renovations in time and that too had to be canceled. Besides, I don't think that anyone got their newsletter in time to know that it would be in the THIRD week in October. Maybe placing the newsletter under new management won't be so bad after all...

Marty Schmidt sent postcards out to inform everyone that the meeting was canceled, but he knew of people that didn't receive them until Saturday. Isn't it amazing how you can send a postcard to Ohio and it gets there the next day, but if you send it across town it takes a week? Well anyway, everything should be back to normal this month. Remember, show up for the raffles!

****

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of November will feature October's selections! Award Ware for the 8-bits and Certificate Maker for the ST.

Both of these packages will be raffled off at the meeting.

TAG INVENTORY:

TAG is now the proud owner of an Atari 800 and an 810 disk drive with several cartridges and programs. What should we do with these precious goodies? Think about it for the next meeting.

****

*** EXPIRATION NOTICE ***

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

NOTE: These are the same people who volunteered for the October meeting. If you can't make PLEASE call me!

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Nelson Greene	Monitor
Ted Beauchamp	Disk Drive
Al Jennings	Printer and interface

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Dennis Wright	Monitor
LeRoy Valley	1040ST
Tom Wheeler	Printer and cable

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

Review

ZENIA XR-100 BARCODE READER
Best Products ($179)
By Jerry Cross

If you were at the recent Atari-Magic show, you probably saw this product being demonstrated. By waving a "wand" over a printed label containing a bunch of lines, you found out if you were the winner of a prize. What you may not have noticed is this was being done with an Atari computer!

Until now, barcode readers were developed for business applications, which means they were made for mostly IBM computers (for well over $400). But now, Xenia has come out with an inexpensive one for the Atari computers. Now, businesses can use the Atari to maintain inventories, simplify their bookkeeping, or any of a number of uses.

What a barcode reader does is "read" a pre-printed label containing data in the form of lines. Do not confuse this with the barcodes on many grocery products. Those are printed in a different format and can not be read with this barcode reader. But it works much same way.

The barcode "wand" consists of a gadget about 5 inches long, and 1 inch thick. It plugs into the joystick port of your Atari, and comes with a 4 foot cable. It is very easy to use. Simply hold the button on the wand while slowly moving it over the barcode to be read. If it reads it correctly, the computer will continue on with it's next task. If not, you will hear a bell which tells you you moved over the code too fast. With some practice you can quickly read a number of codes without error.

The entire package comes with an instruction book, and a disk containing the handler programs, label printout program, and a simple barcode test program. The instruction manual was informative, but was a Xerox'd copy instead of a nice handbook.

There are two different handler programs designed to work with just about any DOS you plan to use with the program. They recommend DOS XL because it uses up less memory. If you plan to use another DOS, there are instructions explaining which of the two handlers you should use, plus any other information needed to get the barcode program running. The same goes for the Language you are using...i.e. Atari Basic, Basic XL/XE, Turbo Basic. A lot of testing was done to be sure it was compatible with many configurations.

One problem that was discovered while using this was with smeared labels. If your label is not completely dry you may accidentally smear the label, and the barcode reader has problems reading it.

This product has a lot of uses. You can easily control inventory by reading a label on a shelf, then entering the number of that product. This is done at many grocery stores. Another use is to label each product and read it at the checkout line, also like the department stores.

The first thing I did was to write a program that could be used at our club meetings. By reading a barcode located on your membership card, then reading a barcode on a magazine from our library, you can quickly check out magazines or hardware without a lot of bookkeeping. The members no longer would have to stand in line, but can check them out themselves.

Writing programs is fairly easy. The handler program inputs a 4 character code, just as though you typed it in yourself using the keyboard. By using a special XIO command, you activate the barcode reader, then issue an Input or GET command. Anyone with a little bit of programming experience can write a program to fit their needs.

Sounds pretty good, huh? Well, have you ever read a review of a product where I didn't find something wrong? This is no exception.

My main concern is the lack of software for this product. Remember, you just spent $179. The first thing you notice is you have a product you can't use! Sure, it's a lot of fun running that test program and reading some barcodes. But if you want to use it for your business, you have to either write a data program yourself (not easy for a beginner) or find someone to do it for you. There is no support at all from the company, and no companies are writing software to support it.

One of the reasons is the very strict copyrighting rules for software developers. If

you plan to sell a program for the barcode reader, you must first purchase stickers for placement on EACH DISK you sell (at $9.00 each!). Then you must promise that the retail price will exceed $60, and you must not release the source code.

Now, if you were a developer, would you want to write a program following these guidelines? I don't expect many commercial programs to come out for use with this product.

Another complaint is with the wand cable. It has to be long enough to reach where you are working, but not so long as to get tangled up around your desk. One easy solution is to use a spiral cable (like the telephone receiver cord). As it stands now, you must either move your computer around the store, or bring the products to the computer. Since your Atari is in no way portable, you will soon find your desk very cluttered.

I have other complaint too, but they are sort of minor (like the sloppy manual).

So, if you are looking for a barcode reader, this is a good product. For the price of the Xenia, an Atari computer and drive, you are still well under the cost of a barcode reader for the IBM. But keep in mind that once you buy it, you are on your own. Find someone who knows how to write a program and you are all set.

My "New" Computer
by Randy Pearson

Yup, I think my computer system is just about complete! I got myself a new computer the other day: An Atari 800.

Ok, so it's not actually new, but it is the computer that I feel rounds out my system.

Yea, I hear you laughing. Or was that a groan? Oh well, no matter. I'm used to it. So far, about all of the computerists that I've informed of my purchase have thought me to be crazy. "Why," they ask, "would you possibly want an OLD (they always emphasize that word) Atari, when you can have an XL/XE?"

Well, here is my answer, and I gave it a lot of thought. I compared the XLs and XEs to the 800, and decided that it all boiled down to convenience vs. annoyance.

The only pluses I could find with owning an Atari 800XL (or the modified 600XL I traded for the 800) were the extra 16K of memory, and the expandibility prospects. Ok, so having 64K as opposed to 48K is nice. Paperclip, my favorite word processing program, gives me nearly double the space. I did very much enjoy being all but assured of never running out of space while writing stories. But, to be honest, I never had run out of room on my previous 48K machine before. I came close, a few times, however. And I once used up nearly all of the expanded space on the 600XL. But, upon thinking about it, if I ever DID run out of room, all I would do is simply continue the story after saving what I had finished. Molding them together when printing would be a bit annoying. So I counted that as an annoyance. And as for programs that require 64K to run, I only have two right now: The Eidodon and Print Shop Companion. The Eidolon bugs me, as a game, so I never played it when I had the 600XL, and Print Shop Companion is nice, but certainly not a must. And on the other side of the tracks, I have two programs that simply won't run on the XL: Protector II, which is a cartridge and cannot be 'XLfix'ed, and Aquatron, which also wouldn't boot right. So, I also counted the programs that I can't now use as being annoyances, or more likely, inconveniences. And ok, having 256K would be great! A RAMdisk is a beautiful invention. But since I don't plan to run a BBS with my 8-bit machine, the only logical use for a RAMdisk is for copying disks. And single disk copying is annoying, but not all THAT annoying. Another annoyance, but one that I can live with.

There are many other annoyances that the XLs have, that the 800 does not. The biggest was not having an internal speaker. I like being able to turn my TV set off, and still know that I am hitting the keys (like I'm doing right now, because my stupid TV set likes to emit a high pitched squeal that is a lot like having someone walk up being you, grab the back of your neck, and start squeezing). Of course, my new system will soon have a monitor, so that chahges it from being an actual consideration to merely being another convenience.

Another XL annoyance is the amount of time one must wait after turning off the machine, before powering it back up. With the 600, I would have to wait anywhere from 10 seconds to over a minute (!!) before it would finally stop giving me a black screen, or that near-useless self test. (Which is better, a Memo Pad or the Self-Test? Good question, eh?) The 800 I have now, on the other hand, actually NEEDS to be warm before it'll boot! I have to turn it on, back off, then back on again. Weird. But a definite improvement.

I also think that having to XLfix all the older programs, which I have an abundance of, is

another big annoyance. It's embarrassing to have a friend over, and try to load a game on an XL/XE. First, try it normally. It died. Shoot... Must need XLfix. Load up that... It died... Darn... Forgot to hold down Option... Or did I hold it down when I shouldn't have?

The 800 has a much nicer, sturdier keyboard. I will admit that the XL's keyboard isn't bad, but the 800 is superior. Feels better, stronger and 'deeper'. And the XE has the absolute WORST keyboard I've ever typed on! It's the same as the ST, and I extremely dislike typing on my ST. The keys are bigger, sure, but they are closer together, so I tend to hit inbetween keys, or off the edge of a key, and hit both. I rarely do that with this 800.

There are a number of miniscule things that I like about the 800 also, like function keys that stick ABOVE the surface of the machine, a guarded System Reset key, four joystick, er, controller jacks (as if I have any games that use all four), and a large door covering the cartridge. (My niece and nephew, 6 and 4 years old, would constantly rip cartridges in and out of their 800XL without turning off the machine first. This would always make me shudder, although why I do not know.)

Both machines have one thing, in particular, that the other one does not. "My 800 has TWO cartridge ports," I say boastingly. "Well MY XL has a HELP key," says the average XL owner, while sticking out a tongue and making a razzberry noise. Ok, so the only thing ever made for the right cartridge port is Monkey Wrench, that Basic helper that hardly anyone ever bought. And on the inverse, I've never seen a program that uses the HELP key, either. So take that as you will.

Ok, so the 800's Basic (in cartridge! None of this holding down Option crud! THAT, to me, is an annoyance.) is a bit glitchy. If I remember to save often, and reboot a lot, I'll do ok. The 800 has a lot less interference than the 600XL I had. Well, ok, not a lot, but it's not quite as bad.

And finally, in my ode to the Atari 800, I must say that I just LOVE the shape, the basic look, feel and color of the 800 over the newer machines. Ok, so the 800 is a tank. But can you drop an 800XL on the ground and still have it in one piece? Heck, you can roll your Toyota over the 800 and not bother it (much)! But, simply put, it looks like an impressive machine! It's large, sturdy, built strong, and'll never rust! It looks impressive! I have non-computer friends who chortle at my ST, (and the 600XL I used to own, as well) but 'Ooo' and 'Ahh' at this 800. It looks, to them, to be the most powerful machine they've ever seen. The 600 looked like a toy, basically.

So, after weighing all the conveniences and annoyances, I simply decided that I could live with the 800's few faults, and could live without the few extras that the newer machines have. To me, newer is not necessarliy better! Some day, I'll tell ya why I like the Atari 835 modem over the newer Atari models. Yup, on the edge of your seats, right? <giggle>

(And by the way, I still have 227 lines free in Paperclip! So PPHHHPT!!!)

Programming

Programming Tips and Tricks
By Earl Hill From The SAGE SCROLL Newsletter.

This month we continue with our discussion of some of the finer points of programming the 8-bit Atari. Last month we left off with the use of the LEN function, which is used as LEN(A$). The next useful string function is not a function per se, but is something that is done with strings. This is what is called concatenation, which is a big word to describe putting one thing onto another. As I have said many times, please type these listings in as we go. Take it from me, you will find that this is the best way to learn the finer points of programming. Here is a little listing to show how these two things are put together:

```
10 DIM A$(10) 20 X=LEN(A$):PRINT X
25 REM PRINTS 0 (A$ IS A "NULL" STRING)
30 A$="ABCD":PRINT LEN(A$)
35 REM PRINTS A NUMBER 4
40 A$(LEN(A$)+1)=A$:PRINT A$
45 REM PRINTS AS "ABCDABCD"
50 X=LEN(A$):PRINT X
55 REM PRINTS AN 8
```

The critical concatenation step is in line 40. Recall that, as un-logical as it may seem, the expression on the left side of the equals sign is the DESTINATION; and that on the right is the SOURCE. What this line does is concatenates or "adds-on" to A$. We will say more about this shortly. Where is this used? Loads of places. For example, in getting disk input, where you want to add the number of a drive to an INPUT filename. (Of course, all these strings have been DIMmed earlier on). Look at this code: (BUT DON'T TYPE IT IN).

```
F$="D:":?  "INPUT TITLE"
INPUT Q$:IF Q$="" THEN F$="D:SCREAN.PIC"
F$(LEN(F$)+1)=Q$
F$(LEN(F$)+1)=".PIC"
```

What this sort of thing does (and as I told you. this is stuff which is useful), is automatically

set up INPUT as a filename with PIC as the extender, if <RETURN> is pressed; and if no extender is used, to add one to it as .PIC. Here is another example:

```
10 DIM A$(30),B$(20)
20 A$="RUN":A$(4)=CHR$(34):A$(5,7)="D1:" 30
POSITION 2,10:?  "Enter as FILENAME:EXT <RET> "
40 REM ...MORE CODE HERE...
50 TRAP 50:INPUT B$:TRAP 40000
60 A$(LEN(A$)+1)=B$
70 REM ...MORE CODE FOLLOWS...
```

What we have done here is get a filename INPUT as B$ and by concatenation put it inside a string which says to RUN a Filename. This is from an AUTORUN.SYS maker from one of the early SAGE DON's. The critical line is line 60, where B$ is out of the end of all the other stuff.

Now lets go on with some more code:

```
10 DIM A$(10),B$(10),C$(4)
20 A$="ABCDEF":PRINT A$
30 B$=A$:PRINT B$:REM GIVES ABCDEF
40 C$=A$:PRINT C$:REM TRY IT AND SEE!
```

As I said, the equals sign is not quite as in Algebra, but here indicates a DESTINATION on the left, and a SOURCE on the right. The important line is number 30, for our purposes, and here line 30 defines string B$ by setting string B$ equal to the string A$.

A little more about strings, and then we'll be able to move on to INPUT. Strings can be defined further by using single subscripts. These take the form of A$(4). The (4) is referred to as a subscript. Here's some more code:

```
10 DIM A$(10),B$(10)
20 A$="12345678":PRINT A$
30 B$=A$(4):PRINT B$:REM ..TRY IT..
40 B$=A$(5):PRINT B$
50 B$(5)=A$(5):PRINT B$:REM ..TRY IT..
60 B$=A$(0):PRINT B$:REM ..AND THIS..
70 B$=A$(9):PRINT B$:REM ..AND THIS..
```

The important line for our purposes is line 50, which illustrates the definition of a DESTINAtION substring,B$(5), with a SOURCE substring A$(5). This operation combines the two substrings to define string B$. To concatenate two strings without losing any characters, the substring of the destination substring must be equal to one plus the character length of the current destination string. For example, in line 50, since the character length of B$ is 4(before line 50 was executed), the destination subscript must be 5. This explains why you see the code, e.g., of A$(LEN(A$)+1).

That's about it for this short introduction to strings. Just for the record, lets define a string with double subscripts. This takes the form Q$=A$(3,5). The double subscript method is useful for examining user INPUT, or user response as in these lines of code:

```
10 DIM A$(5)
20 PRINT "Do you want to continue?  Y/N"
30 INPUT A$
40 IF A$(1,1)="Y" THEN 100:REM ..GO SOMEWHERE
ELSE..
50 END
```

This is nice because only the first letter of the response needs to be checked. I suspect this is enough of this stringy stuff for this month. Next month we will continue with inputs. I think you can see from the above example how this ties in with strings.

Just Starting

JUST FOR FUN...
By Jerry Cross

Where do computers come from?

Hey, this is serious! I was sitting around the other day, just letting my mind wander around...and it occurred to me that I have never seen a computer factory. Have you? I mean, I've seen car factories, cereal factories, furniture factories, but never a computer factory.

It got me to wondering...like when I was a kid and I asked my folks where babies came from. They said the stork brings them. Well, I got out my picture book and, there it was! A stork! And I could even go to the zoo and look at one. They got mad at me once because I let one loose. I said to them "How's it supposed to deliver babies when it's locked up like that!" Then after I grew up a bit I saw this fat lady and said "Look mom, she ate too many Big Macs, huh?" "No" my Mom said, "She's about to have a baby." "Cover your head, Ma!" I screamed "Those storks are ten times bigger then pigeons, and I saw what pigeons can do to a car!"

"No, storks don't bring babies, she has the baby in her stomach." said my Mom. "She will soon go into the hospital and they will take the baby out."

A few years later I had my sex education class. They explained it all to me. They showed me some pictures of a hospital room, with the doctors in their white robes and equipment all over the place. The room was real clean because, they said, they had to keep the dust

out. Dust carries germs, and we didn't want the baby to catch a bug, did we? And when the baby comes out, the doctor would put it on an examination table to make surit was healthy.

So, I learned my first lesson. Don't ever believe your parents. So when my Dad told me that computers come from computer factories, I said "Sure Dad! And I believed you about the Storks. So where is this computer factory?"

"It's in Singapore" He said.

Huh? Singapore? The same place that makes those stupid umbrellas they put in drinks? The place that makes those shirts that are two sizes too small? That's where my Atari came from? "Oh, come on Dad...."

So, I went and got out my picture books again and looked up computer factories. And there, in full color, were pictures of a computer factory! But it didn't look like a regular factory.

Everyone inside had on white coveralls, and white hats and gloves....just like a hospital! And they had all these gadgets with lights and they beeped all the time...like a HOSPITAL!!! And the room was real clean..LIKE A HOSPITAL! I guess they wanted to keep the dust out to keep those bugs out of the computers. And when a computer came out, it was put on a table and they check it to be sure all the parts were there and everything worked.

So that's where they come from! I knew they didn't come from Singapore! So I took a trip over to the hospital but they wouldn't let me into the computer delivery room. The nurse acted like she didn't even know what I was talking about! I showed her my picture book, and told her story about the fat lady. She smiled and told me to sit down and someone would come and take me to the computer delivery room. Then she called someone and said in a low voice "I think you lost one of your patients! Can you come and pick him up?"

Well, by this time it was getting late, so I took off. But at least now I know where they come from. Now for the big question...How do they, er, how can you tell which is, ummm, do they do it in the dark....

Nuts, more questions. Hey Ma!!!

ANSWERS TO FLOW CHART PUZZLE (page 29)

1. B,C,D,E
2. X<O,Y≠ O,Z>O
3. A,C,D,G
4. NOT POSSIBLE.

Review

GFA COMPANION
(For Use With GFA Basic Interpreter.)
By John Holder,
Marathon Computer Press.
Distributed By Michtron, Inc.
Reviewed By Frank and Sally Nagy

GFA COMPANION: a creative JEWEL: Nine Kinds of DIALOG BOXES!

This Dialog Box Source Code Generator and Language Tutorial, with Source Code Libraries, takes the burden out of dialog box construction.

As the name suggests, the COMPANION supports the INTERPRETER with two disks packed full of support goodies and an additional 84 page manual.

GFA Basic Interpreter owners will find this program affords most of the classical Resource Construction Set functions used by "C" programmers.

GFA COMPANION is designed for the beginner to intermediate programmer to cut the time and hassles associated with programming in GEM.

One, of it's two disk set, is jammed with libraries for AES, BIOS, GEMDOS, VDI and XBIOS; sample programs, topical GFATIPS and a helpful list of reference texts.

Then the Programs Disk, gives six tutorials lending further support to the owner's manual.

The GFACLIP acts as a "glorified scratch pad" able to pass data between programs, allowing shorter graphic image loading times. (The 64K "board" can hold two D.E.G.A.S. Screens.)

Create nine different dialog boxes:

A "credits option" has room for a title width of 40 characters. Select font styles: normal, bold or italics; and add up to 12 additional lines.

Create a complete online help routine of up to 42, 12 line boxes of information. Advance to the next page or flip back to previous ones.

Make vertical information boxes for displaying program commands.

Create horizontal information boxes when you don't want to obscure the entire screen.

Build specialized boxes with multiple buttons. Label them Alpha or Num. Paste sliders to boxes.

Display different Resolution Overlays to create dialog boxes usable in all resolutions.

In addition, all function keys and any available key on the keyboard can be redefined to meet needs of a given application.

GFA COMPANION is available from Michtron for $49.95.

Viewpoint

Atari Magic Poop

An editorial by certain members
of the ATARI MAGIC staff

Here's the scoop on the poop from Detroit's ATARI MAGIC Show, with a lot of editorializing mixed in! (that's what this column's all about). Much of this is taken from when MAGIC's beloved systems monitor (and show floor manager) held court in the Hilton Penthouse for visiting user groups.

Hybrid Arts (HA for short)-what more can be said? These folks are more than ridiculous to deal with. We got little advance cooperation before the show, and none at the show. All this stems from Bob Moore's (HA founder) absolute refusal to accept their booth location, even with their prior knowledge. We even gave them a most favorable position in their area (with quick access to their midi maze and Atari). We stuck midi-folk together to abate the loud noise (ahem, "music") that comes from their area. We knew this from driving many miles to other shows. We did our homework...'but, noooooo!' Mr. Moore told us we were wrong; there would be no noise problems.

Basic Bits and Bytes was first. Then Sector One. Then Atari's Sandi Austin personally approached us and asked the permission of the floor manager to tell HA to cool it. No such luck, as HA continued to blast the show floor with simulated explosions, jazz riffs, and other noises. Our repeated requests to them were obliged for durations no longer than 15 seconds-the time it took to walk away from them.

With cooperation like this, can you imagine how unforgiving their software must be? They even had the gall to complain about the other "noise" in the hall being too loud! Our hands were tied, however, as HA didn't see fit to pay for their booth until halfway through the show, and we would have lost $$$'s by telling them to pack up and go. We would have also lost Midi-Maze and its +$900 prize. Somebody let us know if the guy who won ever gets his stash!

My advice to future show givers: don't waste your time with these bums. Midi-Maze is being publicly sold (as of this show), Dr. T and other midi software manufacturers are more than happy to attend (with more advance notice than what we gave them). Now for headache number two...

NO SHOWS-Analog Magazine told us on three different occasions "yeah! we'll be there!" [those occasions: Pittsburgh Atarifest, Buffalo Atarifest, and CES in Chicago] Well, they weren't. It's tough when you count on support in dollars and attendance, and don't get it. At least they published our dates, and we do appreciate that. Vacations, however, don't cut the mustard as excuses (Mrs. Walnum's expected child does, tho). Also in the same shakey boat lies the "New Aladdin" magazine.

Some "no-shows" not only embarassed us, but themselves, as well. Virtusonics paid and missed not only MAGIC's show, but the previous show in San Jose. Also paying and not showing were TDI (who in the *?@! are they) and PCA. PCA sweet talked us into reserving a booth for them for $200 less than the full rate. They pooped out-we lost money on that one.

It's too bad that these corporations don't realize that these shows are not being put on by professionals. Little user group members like you and I stick our collective necks out for Atari's show and marketing folk without too much help. Oh, by the way, Atari, your promised advance monies finally arrived--about five hours in advance of the show. Some help, gang.

Talk about the left hand not knowing what the right hand does: poor Sandi Austin (Atari User Group support chairwoman). She would tell us one thing ("the check is in the mail"), and Atari management would do another ("the check has been awaiting approval on Mel's desk for three weeks"). Having that advance money sure would have helped, but hey, this wouldn't have been Atari's gamble, then. Atari, don't keep your own people in the dark. Help them be honest with us users!

To lead you into thinking this was a problem filled show would be wrong. With great cooperation from Cynthia Sieders and the Hilton Hotel staff, we pulled off a great show. "This is one of the best shows we've attended so far," was heard from Neil Harris of Atari. Does that count the show Atari themselves put on? Wow! On the other hand, these were just some of the problems that arise when putting on an AtariFest. Problems that shouldn't have to happen. We were enriched from the show, the guys who won the ST and Casio keyboard were greatful, and in short, everyone else had a good time.

If you want more detail on the good and bad aspects of this show, we'll be more than happy to give future show sponsors some insight. Leave a message on our BBS (313 978-1685), or call our voice line at (313) 751-8291.

ATARI 800XL

8 BIT NEWS

(This is a recent reprint from a newsletter that can not be located. We are sorry to not attribute the article, but we tried....)

INDUS & CPM...

Ever since acquiring my Indus disc drive, I've been curious about the Future Systems upgrade which promises the purchaser the use of CP/M programs. Accordingly, I'm reprinting in its entirety, the following review of same by Richard Coate of BRACE as it was printed in the May 1987 issue of Puget Sound Atari News:

First of all, what is CP/M ? CP/M stands for 'Control Program for Microcomputers'. It was developed by Digital Research so that the same software could be made to run on a number of different computers. Because of this universality it was a very popular operating system, and literally thousands of programs were written to take advantage of it. Many of these programs are in the public domain and are of very high quality. Until very recently, the only way to use CP/M on the Atari was to buy an ATR8000, which is fairly expensive. Now people who own Indus disk drives can also use this operating system.

I bought the Raa Charger board for my drive over a year ago when Indus was offering them for $50 in the hopes that some user would be able to write the software to enable the Indus to run CP/M. They hoped in vain however, because most Atari users know squat about the Z-80 (the CPU in the Indus) in general, or CP/M specifically. Although the promised software (vaporware?) never materialized the card was nice to have anyway. It sure speeded up disk IO.

Then, about six months ago Future Systems, who bought out Indus, announced that they had developed the necessary software. The price was reasonable, but I thought that the availablility of software might be a problem (CP/M disk format and Atari disk format are not compatible), so I decided to pass. Then they came out with a utility to transfer CP/M files to Atari format and vice-versa. Now, if nothing else, I could download the programs from a BBS and transfer them to CP/M format. So I dashed off a check and eagerly waited for the package to arrive. Soon UPS dropped it off at my front door and I was all set.

The package comes with very complete documentation on CP/M, a CP/M boot disk for the Indus, and a disk with a terminal program for the Atari so that it can communicate properly with the Indus. Also included is the latest revision of DOS XL, with an update to Synchromesh that engages during the boot process so DOS will load at the fast rate.

The terminal program that comes with the program uses a 40 column "window" on an 80 column document, so you have to horizontally scroll through the page to see all the text. This sounded clumsy to me so I also ordered an 80 column terminal program that uses a graphics 8 screen and small characters to fit 80 columns on the screen at once. This cost extra, as did the file conversion utility, and I feel they should both have been a part of the original package.

So far I have only used the 80 colum terminal because I am quite happy with it. The display can be a little hard to read at times but it is basically pretty good. A monochrome monitor would probably help and I wouldn't recommend it at all with a TV. My only real complaints with the terminal program is that there is no way to quit back to DOS, and it can't use the extra memory of an XE as a RAM disk. Those would have been real nice touches.

The CP/M boot disk contains all the files that you need to make CP/M work, but nothing else. Since just having the files for CP/M is like having an Atari with DOS and nothing else, it would have been nice if they would have included a few public domain programs to get you started. The first thing I did was duplicate the disk. This can be done with one drive, but is MUCH easier with two. (The second drive doesn't have to be an Indus.) Even with two drives the process of copying files is very slow. In fact, any time you access another drive with CP/M it is very slow. I later learned through experimentation that even though the Atari can't access the CP/M files, it is perfectly capable of sector copying a CP/M disk, which is much faster than using CP/M to dupe them.

Using CP/M is a lot like using DOS XL. Some of the commands are different, and the Drives are labeled A,B,C instead of 1,2,3, but the format is basically the same. Like DOS XL most of the commands have to be loaded from disk. CP/M boots up very quickly, and any operations that don't involve other drives are also very quick. CP/M comes with a Z-80 editor and debugger for those who are into machine language, and I imagine that some smart people could make the Indus do some pretty amazing things. So far, most of the few programs I've accumulated are games, but I also have a Basic compiler and I plan to try that out soon. I'd like to get my hands on a word processor to see if what's available for CP/M is any better than what is available for the Atari.

CP/M can't do anything the Atari can't, but it is fun to play around with. At the $49.95 I paid for it (I already had the RAM card) I feel that it was well worth it. It costs $129.00 if you need the RAM card and I don't know if I would pay that much for it. The 80 colum terminal program and the file conversion utility each cost $29.95, but you can probably talk them into a discount if you buy it all at once. All of the above can be had from: Future Systems; 9811 Owensmouth Ave. Suite 9; Chatsworth, CA

ST Notes

ST Notes
By LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Well, I'm sitting here looking out the window and I see cold winds blowing, fall colors on the trees, and I can't help but smile. SMILE you say, don't you like warm weather. Well yes, I do, but the cold weather simply gives me another reason (my wife would call it an excuse) to sit in front of my computer and play. And I have been playing the last month...a LOT.

Although Michtron's Disk Utilities for the Atari ST have been around a long time, I can't ever remember seeing an in depth review of them. And I know that there hasn't been a review of their latest update -- version 2.0. This month we'll take a look at some of the goodies this package has to offer, along with some of the possible uses for said goodies.

Looking at the disk supplied by the folks at Michtron, you'll find that it contains a variety of programs. They include the main utility program (MUTIL), a formatter (FORMAT), a screen utility (SNAPSHOT), and two copy programs (MCOPY and MIDUPE).

FORMAT formats a disk with 10 sectors per track, giving the user 400K on a single sided disk and 800K on a double sided disk. This program does what about two dozen other public domain programs do, but doesn't include things like fast format or 82 tracks (for 410K or 820K). However it's a nice formatter and will be especially appreciated by those who don't have a modem or access to a user group.

SNAPSHOT is a desktop accessory that allows you to capture the current screen at any time in a Degas file. You'll see how handy this utility can be as we get into MUTIL a little later. It's also handy for capturing that stunning startup screen on your favorite game!

The two copy utilities are not really fancy, just convenient. MCOPY allows you to read in a disk that has less than 150K on it and makes multiple copies VERY quickly. It achieves this by only copying and formatting those sections of the disk that are actually used by the program. Great utility if you need to mass produce your latest creation. MIDUPE is included to quickly copy disks formatted with the FORMAT program mentioned above. It will handle just about any format and even handles some copy protected software. It will not, however, handle any of the newer copy protection schemes.

OK, it's time to get down to the meat of this review. I didn't buy Michtron Utilities for all of those programs mentioned above (although they are nice for FREE!), I just wanted a good set of disk utilities. Not wanting to waste your time and make you read this review all the way through just to find out if it's any good or not, I'll tell you right away -- I ended up with an excellent set of disk utilities! Now that that's out of the way, read on to find out what Michtron Utilities has to offer...

The main program MUTIL is GEM based and is NOT copy protected. It runs fine from a hard drive or a folder and there's no resource file to worry about. Double clicking on MUTIL.PRG brings up a GEM screen with drop down menus labeled DESK, MODIFY, SECTOR, and ATTRIBUTES. As with most GEM programs, the DESK option is simply a "credit" screen listing the program name and the author, Timothy Purves.

Under MODIFY we find three options -- VIEW DISK, VIEW FILE, and QUIT. Selecting VIEW DISK will bring up a window of current available drives. Using the mouse you simply point at the drive which you want to see and click. You are now looking directly at data on the disk starting at track 0 sector 1. The screen displays 256K of data at a time, so it requires two screens to view an entire sector. The screen is split up into two sections, one displaying hex data and the other ascii. By clicking on a value in either the hex or ascii section you can modify that value as desired.

At the bottom of the screen is what I would call the "control" area. Here all of your selections are made and information is presented in a well laid out manner. There is a "cursor at" line showing you your current position along with the hex, binary, decimal, and ascii equivalents of the current character. Very handy indeed. Directly below and to the left are the track and sector slider bars. These slider bars show your current track and sector, and you can use the arrows at either end to move one track or sector at a time, or you can grab the indicator and drag it to the desired area. Another nice feature is the ability to click on the word "track" or "sector" and type in the desired number directly! By the way, if you look at a hard drive, you won't see the track and sector sliders, you'll only see the sector slider. Michtron offers you two ways in which to VIEW DISK, track or relative. Track mode shows you the track number and the sector number shown is with respect to that track number. Thus, on a single sided disk, you would see sectors 1 through 9 on track 0, then sectors 1 through 9 on track 1, etc. In relative mode the track slider goes away and you will see sectors 1 through 720. Relative mode is automatically enabled for a hard drive, since a hard drive doesn't have tracks.

To the right of the sliders are four buttons -- Search, Continue, Relative, Exit. The Exit

button (obviously) exits you from this screen. The search button allows you to search for any string (hex or ascii!). The entire disk will be searched until the string is found. After the first occurrence is found, the Continue button allows you find other occurrences. The Relative button allows you switch to relative mode. Once selected, the button will say Track.

The screen layout just described is very well thought out and gives a lot of information without cluttering up the display. The VIEW FILE option uses this very same screen, the only difference being that you can look directly at a file. In VIEW FILE you are automatically set to relative mode, since you don't know if the file is contiguous on the disk or not. MUTIL simply shows a 100 sector file as sectors 1 through 100. Clicking on VIEW FILE brings up a file selector box, and after selecting a file, the file is displayed in the same manner as described above.

Now that you've got that screen up there with all that data, wouldn't it be nice to get a hard copy? Well, Michtron Utilities provides you with three methods of capturing your data. First, you can always do an Alt-Help and do a screen dump. Since this takes a good deal of time, Michtron has thoughtfully provided an ascii screen dump that simply dumps the relevant data to the printer...FAST! The final method involves using the desk accessory SNAPSHOT and capturing the current screen in a Degas file. Now you can manipulate the picture with your favorite paint program and perhaps use it in demonstrations or print it out at a later time.

Taking a look at the SECTOR menu we find a variety of options: Relative Mode, Track Mode, Copy Sectors, Verify Sectors, Format Tracks, and Clear Sectors. The first two options, Relative and Track Mode, simply allow you to select the default mode that Michtron Utilities will operate in. The Copy Sectors option allows you to copy sectors from anywhere to anywhere. Verify Sectors will check any sectors that you designate and will flag any unusable or damaged sectors. This is extremely helpful when you are trying to recover a damaged disk. You can find the damaged sectors, then copy the good ones to another disk and see if any of your files are usable. Format Tracks does exactly that -- formats individual tracks...9 sector format only however, sigh. The last option, Clear Sectors, is meant for clearing all unused sectors. Using this option will make the recovery of a deleted file impossible. Unfortunately, while Clear Sectors does work, it doesn't clean up the FAT when it's done. Now THAT would be nice! Are you listening Michtron?

The last menu, ATTRIBUTES, has only two options -- File Attributes and Disk Usage. File Attributes allows you change various characteristics of a file such as name, date, and time. You can also change system attributes related to the file like whether it's hidden, whether it's a system or normal file, and whether it's read only. File Attributes even allows you to recover a deleted file or change the volume label on the disk! As you can see, this menu item will probably see the most use.

Selecting File Attributes and the desired drive brings up an expanded version of the file selector box. Each file on the disk is listed along with size in bytes, date and time of creation, starting cluster number, and starting sector number. Previously deleted files are shown with a question mark as the first character in the file name. Selecting a good file will simply bring up a menu box which allows you to change any of the attributes listed above. Clicking on deleted file allows you to attempt to recover it. If you haven't written anything to the disk since you deleted the file, it'll work every time (BIG improvement over the earlier version -- I could never get it to work!). If you've written to the disk...Sorry.

Clicking on a volume label (you have to already have one) allows you to change it. If you formatted the disk without a label, then you can't add one. File Attributes even allows you to create two files with the same name! If you really want to hide some data, TOS only looks at the first file.

The last option available in Michtron Utilities is Disk Usage. After selecting the desired drive, you will be presented with a graphic map of the usage of disk space. Black squares represent used space and white ones represent unused space. If you've got a lot of white mixed in with the black, then your disk is fragmented, which negatively affects disk performance.

Well, as you can see, Michtron provides you with an excellent package for analyzing, modifying, and (if you're not careful) destroying your precious media. The package retails for $59.95 and is worth every penny. It does more and offers more features than other disk utility I've tried.

Last month you may have noticed that my column was a little short. It wasn't my fault. No really, some of the material was cut to make room for another article. So here's the remaining tidbits:

Looking for a nice way to store some of your more popular sounds for your Casio CZ-1, CZ-101, CZ-1000, CZ-3000, or CZ-5000? The EZ-CZ cartridge by Micro-W Distributing might be just the ticket. It features four banks for a total of 64 sounds and it's backed up by 2 standard AAA batteries that should last about 2 years (batteries are easily replaced). I just

purchased one and it works great on my CZ-1000! Cost is just $45.00. Micro-W Distributing, 1342 B. Route 23, Butler, N.J. 07405. 201-838-9027.

I know, I know, you just bought a hard drive and your favorite program won't run on it because it copy protected. It's not fair right? Right! A new product by Utilities Unlimited removes the protection from 100 programs. So far it seems to work on most of the 100 listed in it's menu (programs like Time Bandits, Super Cycle and N-Vision) but but there's a few (like Hippo and Haba products) that it just doesn't seem to work on. Anyhow, Music Studio now works just fine on my hard drive. All this for $29.95. Utilities Unlimited, P.O. Box 70, Brush Prairie, WASHINGTON 98606. 206-254-6530.

Well, that's it for this month. Tune in next month when we'll look at a great program (I think) for designing new fonts for Publishing Partner. See ya later!

Telecom

What's it like to run a BBS?
by Randy Pearson

That has to be the most dreaded question a caller can ask a SysOp. I mentioned, in an earlier article, that you SHOULD ask a SysOp this question, to see what kind of answer you'll get. And if you did, I'll bet your reply was something like this: "Uh, well...Um, it's...well, it's fun.... Yea, fun... But tough... Yea, tough...So, how's that ingrown toenail of yours doing?"

Most System Operators tend to shy away from that question, because it's not easily answered. But what the heck, let me take a crack at the question, "What's it like, being a SysOp?".

Well, for starters, it can be incredibly time consuming, if you let it. A BBS can easily eat up all your spare time, what with getting new programs/text files for people to download/read, writing messages, chatting with new users, etc. It should be understandable that being the SysOp, you are solely responsible for the well-being of your board. You really have to put new files on your board every now and again because, obviously, once a person has read/downloaded all he wants, he won't spend as much time around your place. So that is one big thing that you must do, or, if you are lucky, you might be able to con a user into doing it for you, by giving him the distinction of being called the Co-SysOp. (Of course, my Co-SysOps are lazier than I am, so, unfortunately, I still do most of my own work.)

I also find that if I don't call my own board for a week or so, the message base tends to die out. Being SysOp, a good share of the messages are for me. I have a good 'nucleus' of users in my message base, but even they become a bit lax when I'm not around.

As for chatting with users, that is not a necessity for running a good BBS. It IS rather fun, certainly, but chatting is the single most important thing to keep your eye on! Think about it: If three people call and all page you, and you chat with them all for a decent amount of time, you've just seen, maybe, three hours of your life zip by. Believe me, time flies when your typing away. And not only is that time you've lost, but it's also time that others have lost. There have been too many occasions where, after ending an hour long chat, someone has immediately called, paged, and asked, "Man, why has your board been busy for the past hour???" It tends to piss people off, you know. Another thing I found about chatting, is that when you do so, especially with young kids who don't understand the concept of bulletin boards, they will usually call back within the hour, page you a 153 times, then write you a message saying, "Why won't you chat with me? You hate me, right?" Don't laugh, it's happened before. Far too many times. I even got a voice call at 1:30am from a disgruntled female caller.

The amount of time you need to spend of your board also depends on the type of BBS program you decide to use. There are BBS programs that are virtually self maintaining, and others that need to be watched like a baby playing with the electric carving knife. When I first started my BBS, I used the Bulletin Board Construction Set (BBCS), which is a time consuming program, not only to keep running, but to GET running in the first place. It took me a number of weeks to finally get BBCS working the way I wanted it. But anyway, BBCS, and other similar programs, take a lot more maintenance than others. For one, the message base is set up as a large file. You had to set the size you wanted your message base to be, and when it would fill up, it wouldn't let anybody else write messages until you went in and compacted the file. But before you could do that, you had to go through the base, and delete old messages! Now that could take anywhere from a half hour to two hours, depending on how picky you are. In relation, the program I use now, Nite Lite, has a scrolling type message base, so when a new message is entered, the message at the other end of the base 'falls off' to make room. Thus, making my job a lot easier.

But, on the converse, Nite Lite's userlog is not self maintaining, where BBCS's was. People who call now have to apply for a password, then I put them in the userlog. So I can't get too lazy about calling my own board, or new users

start to wonder what's going on. But I do like that better than BBCS's userlog setup, where it would automatically put the callers in the userlog, since now, if some weirdo calls up with a name like "The Leopard," he won't be able to do any 'damage.' Call me paranoid, but I make things a lot tougher on myself by calling about 75% of the new callers, to make sure they are who they say they are. It is more time spent on my board, but I feel better, and safer, about doing it.

So, if you have a completely self-maintaining BBS program, and can get yourself a good Co-SysOp, you can cut down the amount of time you spend on your BBS to nearly nil. But, if you never bother to make an appearance on your own board, others will quickly tire of it. If you never write messages, people will think, "Well heck, why should I bother?" You have to understand that it IS your board, and you are the only person who really cares whether or not your board is up. No matter how loyal users can be, you pay the bills, so they have no real stake in the board.

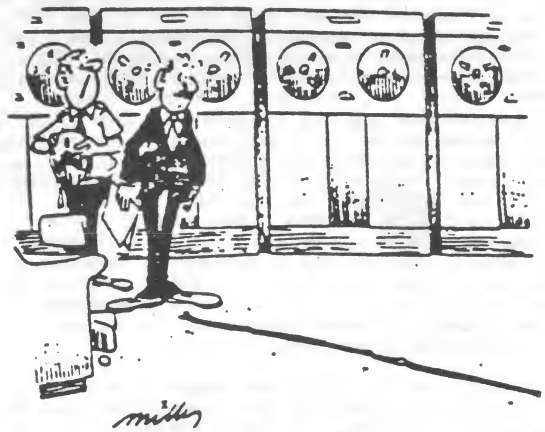
Another negative aspect I've noticed is how much of a thankless job running a BBS can be. Do you realize that out of the over 225 users I currently have, I'd say less then 15 of them call at all regularly, and that's being very generous. There are maybe another 20 that I know I'll see every so often, and another 20 that'll call back within a month or two. And on the flip side, there are at LEAST 120 callers who never even called back once I validated their access! Can you imagine that? That's over half of the people that never bothered to call again, and I know that I'm being overly generous in MY favor! I've probably had well over 500 callers in my 2 years, so you can see how many were deleted because I never saw them again. So, if you're easily depressed by numbers like that, SysOping is not for you.

But at the same time, there is little that is more rewarding than seeing your first caller, after spending weeks getting your board set up and put online. It is great to get logoff comments from people saying, "Wow, this is a really great board!" I think my biggest thrill was when I read a rather touching public message, on my board, from the Ingham County Commissioner. He had been a regular for a couple months when he wrote me, saying that, being so busy, he had limited his BBS calling to only two boards, mine and the Political Forum!

So, maybe I don't get a lot of repeat customers, but the few people who do frequent my board are among the most creative, interesting, funny people I've ever met! See, SysOping is a marvelous way to meet people. In real life, before I became a SysOp, I was a nobody. Just an unpopular loner. But now, I have a lot of very interesting friends, and I met them through my board. I even met my last girlfriend that way. I love to have a place to not only put up my own stories and humor, but other callers' writings, not to mention just other good files. I will go out of my way to get my users the best entertainment. I'll spend long distance money to call other boards to get files, even go so far as borrowing a friend's Compuserve account. Just recently, I subscribed to PC Pursuit for the same reason. I've stayed up until 8am before, perfecting an update of the board. Sure, I may be cursing a lot, but I can't describe the feeling of accomplishment to finally see it working, and to see a caller look around, and leave with a, "good job!" logoff comment.

So, think about what I said before putting up your own board. And I cannot emphasize enough my feelings on people who, after calling one BBS, decide to put up their own board. I honestly think that, in order to be able to handle the strange situations that will pop up, you must understand how the BBS community works. There are many, many different personalities out there, and they can clash very strongly in this medium.

In conclusion, if you can handle the basic thanklessness you'll get from most people, and can make a LOT of time to make your board how you want, and more importantly keep it that way, you'll find that the few good times will stick out in your mind more than the bad ones!



"HE'S GOT THE INFORMATION YOU WANT . . . YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE FINDING HIM."

Review

The Atari ST for Beginners
by R. Luers and Michael Stein
Review by Peter Miller

This well-written book is addressed to people who have little experience using computers and who are starting to use their own ST. It is published by Abacus as part of a series of many books dealing with various topics pertaining to Atari ST computers. I infer that the big number 1 on the spine of the book refers to its place in this series. The text refers the reader to other books in the series for more information about specific topics.

The first two chapters cover "Setting up & connecting the ST" and "Working with the ST". The information here is similar to that presented in the Owner's Manual for the ST but with added description, more pictures and more examples in some cases. The paragraphs on operation of the standard desk accesories (Control Panel, VT52 Emulator and Install Printer) contain helpful additional information, such as "set Pixels/line to 960 and Quality to Final when using Epson printers for screen dumps" (to print the whole screen), and use of Esc or Backspace to erase character fields in selector boxes, as when setting the time, etc.

Chapters 3 and 4 are introductions to ST BASIC and LOGO, respectively. These chapters tell you in tutorial fashion what to do to load the language program and to enter and try out simple programs in each. The chapter on ST BASIC covers working with windows, PRINT and INPUT, GOTO, IF...THEN...ELSE, FOR..NEXT loops, GOSUB...RETURN and REM statements. The discussion of the different types of variables available in ST BASIC is a very helpful supplement to the ST BASIC Sourcebook provided with the Language Disk. Graphics commands, such as CIRCLE, ELLIPSE, LINEF, PCIRCLE are demonstrated with the hint that you will have to experiment with the pixel counts, depending on the screen resolution. Five programs at the end of the chapter work with text and numbers (no graphics) to show the reader how to get started writing his own programs.

Chapter 4 on the LOGO language develops a vocabulary of commands and gives an outline for debugging programs. Usage is illustrated by short programs visible in the pictures of the computer monitor, which also show the resulting graphics pattern.

Chapter 5 starts with some background about computers and components, binary numbers and differences among various kinds of memory chips. After this there are brief sections on peripherals and options for the ST, describing what types of devices can be plugged into the various connectors on the back and sides of the ST. (The cartridge port is not mentioned.)

I found interesting the table in Appendix A which gives the correspondence between control key combinations and the address of the character (0-255) in the Atari character set. Some characters have more than one key combination assigned. The full character set is pictured in a 16x16 matrix. Appendix B contains 8 short BASIC programs for converting numbers from one base to another, e.g. binary to decimal. Appendix C is a glossary of computer terms, and Appendix D is two and a half pages of BASIC error messages with suggestions of what to do when the message appears.

This book is the sort of thing that many beginners are looking for. I would expect copies placed in Atari club libraries to be read and appreciated by new and prospective ST owners. It is clear and easy to read. The structure of the text is apparent to the reader. Many illustrations are presented effectively, adjacent to the relevant text. This book teaches the fundamentals it covers quickly and easily. After you read it you are better equipped to understand the language reference books provided with your ST.

Industry Report

RAISING PHONE FEES FOR COMPUTER NETWORK USERS
(Combined Reports)
Oct. 5, 1987

FCC Chairman Dennis R. Patrick said Friday that a proposal to raise telephone fees for computer network users is based on fairness. But users say the plan would crush the fledgling industry.

In testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Telecommunications subcommittee, Patrick said the proposal would charge computer users the same fees now paid by long-distance callers.

Home computer users, say the added costs would force many of them off the computer networks they use to communicate with electronic databases across the country -- exchanging information on electronic bulletin boards, checking stock market reports, making airline reservations, and exchanging public domain computer programs.

"This would severely retard the coming of the information age," said Allan Conner, president of DunsNet, a company of the Dun & Bradstreet Corp.

The implications of the proposal extend far beyond home computer users.

Schools would be forced to cut back their use of electronic data bases for research, said John Stuckey, director of academic computing at Northeastern University.

Cutbacks also would be forced at hospitals, where doctors rely on computerized medical data bases for quick reference, said Jacquelline Bastille, director of the medical library at Massachusetts General Hospital.

"This is a vital service," she said. "Access to biomedical information is needed quickly. Same-day retrieval is critical to quality patient care."

"This is a genuine threat to our society," said Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., subcommittee chairman.

LONE WITNESS DEFENDS PROPOSAL

FCC Chairman Dennis R. Patrick, the lone witness defending the proposal, said government regulators see the issue as one of fairness -- everyone who uses the local phone network should pay the costs of maintaining it.

"If we exempt one category of users, that means another category of users will have to pay more," he said. "It's not clear to me it is appropriate in an equity sense if it increases the amount borne by low-income voice users."

Patrick estimated the access charges on information service providers would reduce long-distance rates by about 1 percent.

"We want to see the (computer) networks evolve in response to the economics of the marketplace ... not in response to subsidies," he said.

Rep. Edward J. Markey, D-Mass., subcommittee chairman, noted the strong opposition to the proposal from computer users who have sent him more than 4,000 letters.

The FCC, when it adopted the access charge system in 1982, exempted information service providers from the fees because of the fear that the new industry would not withstand the sudden increase in costs.

Now, the FCC believes, it may be time to lift the exemption, but the agency has found scant support for that conclusion. Even some of the local Bell operating companies, which receive the access charges, have reacted with only lukewarm support.

SHARE THE LINE

Users also cite that phone companies combine such electronic calls so that several of them may be transmitted over the same telephone line. Since standard (voice) calls cannot be combined this way, users claim that several users would be charged for the same call.

The proposal would add about $4.50 an hour to the cost of hooking up to information services. For some of the lower-priced services, the additional cost would more than double the hourly rates.

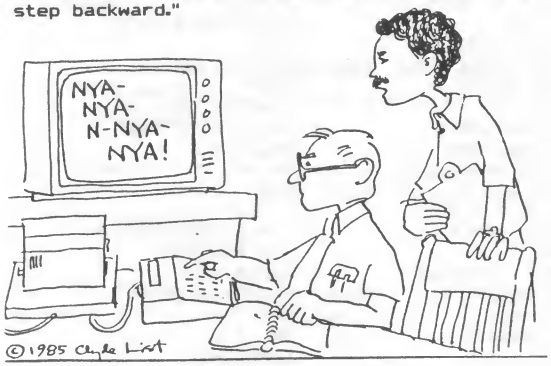
Floyd H. Trogdon, vice president of Telenet Communications Corp., a computer network that connects computer users with information data bases, said the access charges would raise some of its off-peak rates by 500 percent. He estimated that the access charges from the computer industry would lower long-distance rates by less than one half of one percent.

Computer users said electronic information services are already paying their share of phone network costs in a flat-rate surcharge per customer.

Using one of the more than 15,000 electronic billboards on computer networks throughout the country, a computer user with a question about how to handle a tax matter, for example, can dial into a network, pose the question in a message and post it on such a billboard. Readers scanning the different messages can answer the question, posting their message in the same way.

"That kind of interaction happens on the order of every five seconds throughout the United States," tenEyck said.

He added, "One of the ways to make the technology more affordable is to increase the size of the market. Reducing the market is a step backward."



"HMMM- THAT *IS* A NASTY BUG YOU HAVE THERE!"

ST Technical

This message was taken from the Iron Works BBS (408) 257-7147

Date: 10-25-87
From: ANDY NICOLA
Subj: MEGA DEAD LIST

Here is the list of programs which will not load or are otherwise non-functional in 'my' Mega. These titles are not in any order. For the most part I received exceptions with either 2 or 4 bombs. The others simply would not load due to copy protection techniques or other reasons not discernable.

TITLE	COMPANY
GFL FOOTBALL	ACTIVISION
H & D FORTH	MIRAGE CONCEPTS
PHANTASIE	S.S.I.
PINBALL	MICHTRON
WRESTLING	EPYX
SOLITAIR	SOFTLOGIK
ARCTIC FOX	ELECTRONIC ARTS
CHAMPIONSHIP BASEBALL	ACTIVISION
WORD WRITER 2.0	TIMEWORKS
TEMPLE OF APSHAI	TRILOGY EPYX
SHANHAI	ACTIVISON
SPACE PILOT	PARADOX
SPACE STATION	PARADOX
ST KARATE	PARADOX
RENEGADE	MASTERTRONICS
NINJA	MASTERTRONICS
OGRE	ELECTRONIC ARTS
SILENT SERVICE	MICROPROSE
ST POOL	SHELBOURNE
HIGH ROLLER	MINDSCAPE
FINAL WORD	MARK OF THE UNICORN
K SWITCH	ANTIC/KUMA
REGENT BASE	REGENT
HIPPO SIMPLE	HIPPOPOTAMUS
HOLE-IN-ONE-GOLF	ARTWORX
DECIMAL DUNGEON	UNICORN
FRACTION ACTION	UNICORN
SKY FOX	ELECTRONIC ARTS
SUPER CYCLE	EPYX
IASS TIMES TONE TOWN	ACTIVISION
HABA SPELL	HABA
TEXT-PRO	ABACUS
COLOUR SPACE	ANTIC/LLAMASOFT
PRO-FORTRAN 77	PROSPERO
MACRO ASSEMBLER	METACOMCO
HIPPO-C	HABA
L.D.W. BASIC	L.D.W.
GOLDEN PATH	FIREBIRD/RAINBIRD
CHAT 2.0	SST SYSTEMS
OMEGA TERMINAL	SUPRA CORP.
GFA DRAFT	MICHTRON/GFA
CZ PATCH	DR. T's
DX HEAVEN	DR. T's
PARTNER ST	TIMEWORKS
VIP	DITEK LTD.
VIP - GEM VERSION	ISD MARKETING
PUBLISHING PARTNER	SOFTLOGIK
ARKANOID	SILICON BEACH SOFTWARE
CHESSMASTER 2000	ELECTRONIC ARTS
PSION CHESS	PSION/ATARI
TECHMATE	SZABO/MICHTRON
ELECTRA-SPELL	ABACUS
MICHTRON BBS	MICHTRON
KINDERAMA	UNICORN
HOMEWORK HELPER-MATH	SPINNAKER
HIPPO ALMANAC	HIPPO
LITTLE COMP. PEOPLE	ACTIVISION
BUZZWORD	BUZZWORD GAME CO.
CARDIAC ARREST	SIONE
MENU+	METACOMCO
ST SCRUNCH	CHERRY SOFTWARE
K-RESOURCE	KUMA
BOS 5	BOS NATIONAL
POWER EDIT	POWER SYSTEMS
POWER ASSIST	POWER SYSTEMS
POWER VISION	POWER SYSTEMS
BASIC-M	PHILON
HENRY'S FUNDAMENTAL	BASIC PHILON
POWER PRINT	ALPHA SYSTEMS
MAGIC SAC 4.36	DATA PACIFIC
HABAWRITER	HABA
BUSINESS LETTERS	HABA
WILLS	HABA
HABADEX PHONEBOOK	HABA
HABAVIEW	HABA
MICRO KITCHEN COMP.	FTL
GFA BASIC - 2.0	MICHTRON/GFA
K - ROGET	KUMA
KNIGHT ORC	LEVEL 9 COMPUTING
JEWELS OF DARKNESS	LEVEL 9 COMPUTING
PHA$AR	MARKSMAN TECHNOLOGY
DOLLARS & $ENSE	MONOGRAM
AIRBALL	MICHTRON/MICRODEAL
MARK WILLIAMS C	MARK WILLIAMS CO.
G.I.S.T. SOUND EDITOR	ANTIC
MUSIC STUDIO	ACTIVISION
N-VISION	AUDIO LITE
ISGUR PORTFOLIO	BATTERIES INCLUDED
STACCOUNTS	ISD MARKETING
SWORD OF KADASH	PENGUIN SOFTWARE
ST WARS MILES	COMPUTING
MACRO MANAGER	BLUE MOON SOFTWARE
MACRO DESK	BLUE MOON SOFTWARE
SIKEY	SHANNER INTERNATIONAL
ACTION PAK	ACTION SOFTWARE

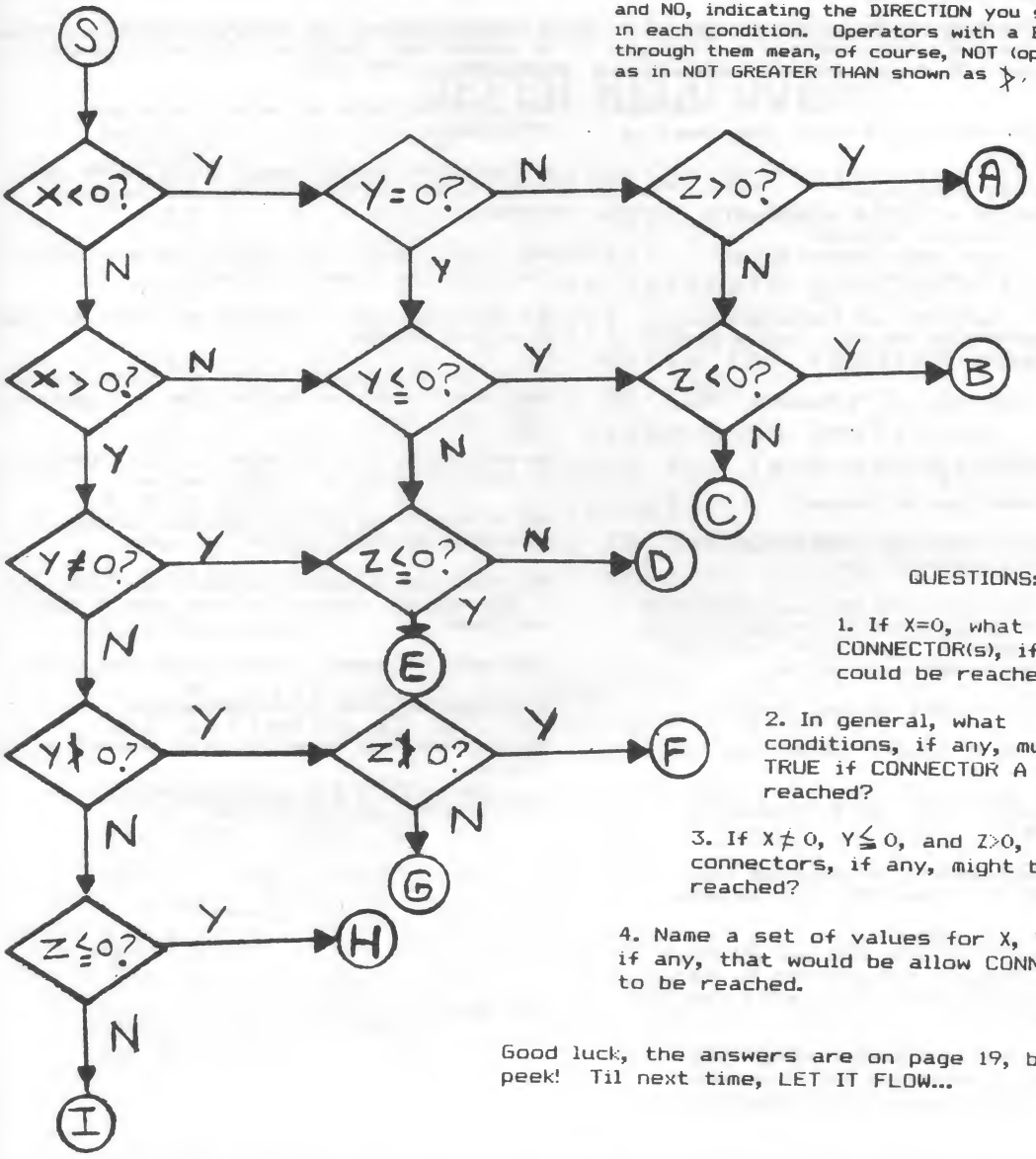
94 Titles in this list with 15 others currently in testing in conjunction with the software publishers. Total = 109 out of 659 tested. Incompatibility ratio = 16.5% These 'full feature' tests were conducted over the last 2 months. I can truthfully say that I have done more with my MEGA in the last 2 months than most people will do with them in the next 2 years!! Anyone disputing my claim here is free to call me regarding my method of testing, integrity of file tested and whether or not my MEGA machine is performing as per Atari's specifications.

Andy Nicola
216-779-4237 MEGA IV BBS

FUNSTUFF

DECISIONS!
by Guy A. Hurt (C.H.A.O.S.)

My Puzzle for this month's M.A.M. is a FLOWCHART. After you study the chart, see if you can answer the questions below. The flowchart begins at CONNECTOR "S" and the "Y" and "N" outside each decision box stand for YES and NO, indicating the DIRECTION you should go in each condition. Operators with a BAR through them mean, of course, NOT (operator)... as in NOT GREATER THAN shown as $\not>$.



QUESTIONS:

1. If X=0, what CONNECTOR(s), if any, could be reached?

2. In general, what conditions, if any, must be TRUE if CONNECTOR A is reached?

3. If $X \neq 0$, $Y \leqq 0$, and $Z > 0$, what connectors, if any, might be reached?

4. Name a set of values for X, Y, and Z, if any, that would be allow CONNECTOR I to be reached.

Good luck, the answers are on page 19, but don't peek! Til next time, LET IT FLOW...

Last Hacks

As you know, this is the last issue of MAM to come out of Lansing. Patty and Bill Rayl of Ann Arbor will begin publishing with the December issue.

So, as we jump over to the other side, where we can call and ask:

Where's the newsletter?
Why wasn't my article published?
Who edited my article?
Is your spell checker broken?
etc, etc, etc...

We the Editor, Publisher and Paste-up-Crew, being of unsound mind and nerve racked bodies leave this, our...

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To the Ann Arbor Group we leave:

One custom made rack for nerves.

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A code book that even the CIA, and the FBI or the KGB would like to have to interpret STwriter, Wordperfect, Atariwriter, Paperclip, and others too numerous to mention.

1,001 macros to convert various formats.

A 6 year supply of commas removed from various articles.

A year's supply of near new indentations - slightly used.

Our stock in pharmaceutical companies for various types of tranquilizers and headache remedies.

A multifunction clock that receives articles 3 days before they are sent in order to meet deadlines and allows the printer extra days to get the magazine out.

Six notebooks full of clippings marked "too small to use"; 14 notebooks full of articles marked "too long to use and too complicated to edit".

Our entire collection of articles not worth saving.

A 3 year supply of upcoming deadlines which must be met.....or else.

A bulging notebook of advertisers who are going to publish next month, in a couple of months, in six months....."FOR SURE".

One gallon of white out with a spray gun attachment.

A closet full of bulk mailing rubber bands and stickers and the Postmaster's home telephone number.

The latest list of instructions for bulk mailing that came pre-stamped "obsolete".

Our 300 page book of excuses with over 100 pages of unused excuses.

A pair of magic buffer shears for those articles that run 2 sentences past a page or 3 sentences short of a page.

We were going to leave them a 2 quart container of indecision, but we couldn't decide.

MCI to help bring the long distance collect calls down to under $100.00 per month.

An entire pad of paper printed on one side with "I told you so" and on the other with "I thought you knew."

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Rich Barnes Rich Barnes

John Nagy John Nagy

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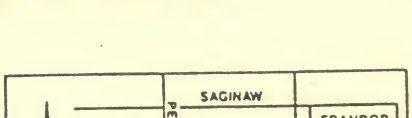

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Michigan Atari Magazine

Your Atari Interface

Inside this issue:

Atari News and Comment

Interview with Neil Harris

Silicon Spelunking

Build Your Own 8bit Power Supply

and MORE...

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Vol. 2, No. 12
Dec. 1987

MAM this Month

Features

From the Editors' Desks	1
Atari News and Comment	2
"Phoneside" Chat with Neil Harris	2
On the Fritz	4
De-ARCing ST Files	5
Building an XL/ XE Power Supply	7
ST Notes	10
Eight Bits' Worth	10
ST Filetypes & Filename Extensions	13
COMDEX News: Atari's Transputer	17
221 B Baker Street	19
Bits of BASIC	20
Silican Spelunking	21

Club News and Minutes

BCAUG	(Battle Creek, MI)	23
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	23
GAG	(Flint, MI)	24
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	25
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	26
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	26
TAG	(Saginaw/ Tri-Cities)	27
WAUG!	(Ann Arbor, MI)	29

Advertisers

Interactive MicroSystems	4
Avante-Garde Systems	9
Sector One	14
State Street Computer	18
Schubert Corporations	Ins. Front Cov.
Basic Bits 'n Bytes	Ins. Back Cov.
Rite Way	Back Cover

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From the Editors' Desks

Seasons Greetings, and welcome to the new look of the Michigan Atari Magazine.

We've had an educating experience putting this issue together, and we know it will continue to be lots of fun in the future. But, we sure do know what John Nagy has gone through in the past one and a half years he's operated this magazine. He deserves all the compliments he's gotten in the past and a warm thanks from us all!

It's also been very educational traveling to some of the user groups to tell them of the changes we planned and get their input. We would like to thank GRASS, BKAUG, and GAG for allowing us to bore them to death with our ideas for improvements on what they knew to be an already fine magazine. We had lots of fun hunting down their meeting places, and seeing how the groups operate. There is a lot of diversity in these user groups. Here's to keeping it that way!

We'd also like to welcome MACE into the happy MAM family. For those of you unfamiliar with Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, MACE is based in Southfield and at one time was the largest computer user group in the world. They're still not small and they have some very talented members. MACE has stopped production of its own well-known Journal to join MAM and we're glad to have them along!

One of our planned regular features, space permitting, will be a "Letters to the Editors" section for you to voice your concerns about MAM, Atari, or computing in general.

Another article we would like to continue is "On the Fritz," the question and answer column on page 4. This month's column is reprinted from the Nov. WAUG! newsletter for the benefit of all MAM readers who couldn't see it there. To contine this feature, all we need is questions from *you*. Bob Fritz is an authorized Atari Service Technician and he's just dying to answer your questions!

Letters and questions can be sent to our mailing address or uploaded to the Treasure CheST BBS at (313)973-9137.

I guess the only thing left to say is a quote from an ad for a certain wine cooler..."Thank you for your support."

ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT

Editorial By JOHN NAGY

Is there a PC in Atari's Future? Maybe Two...?

Before the PC clone is even available, it has been re-dubbed the PC-1, making room on the roster for the PC-2, a PC/AT clone with slots.... In the meantime, the PC-1 release is being pushed back by failing FCC certification. More interference-preventing internal shields must be added. It is rumored that monochrome-bundled PCs will only come with EGA color graphics instead of EGA and CGA. This has not been confirmed.

LOCAL ATARI NETWORK

Named (can you believe it?) "Moses' PromisLan," Atari promises a cheap and effective interface for up to 17 STs and "common IBM" machines using common bell wire. Shown at COMDEX, it joins the list of "coming" products, with an unreleased release date.

Meanwhile we wait, and wait, and... for the Atari Laser Printer, which, by the way, is not going to be the cheapest or most versatile $1500 (price now is $1995) printer -- if it emerges as planned. Several other, "standard" lasers have hit the market (and shelves!!) since Atari announced its laser printer.

We can hope that a reason for the holdup may be some liscensing agreements for the Postscript graphics language. Despite becoming an industry standard, the rights to use or emulate the Postscript system are copyrighted, and expensive. If Atari can either cut a deal or come up with a viable alternative, the Atari Laser may yet find a market, *even though* you will need an Atari computer to use it.

Booty for Non-Pirates

Piracy of commercial programs is such a problem in the low-end computer market that many software companies just give up. Another move is to get tough. Michtron, one of the leading ST software marketers, has offered a bounty on pirate boards, telecommunication services offering illegal copies of commercial programs. Turn in a BBS number verifiable to have Michtron programs on it, and Michtron will give you $200 or $400 of free software. Turn in three numbers, and Michtron will give you a hard drive! Sounds a bit like vigilante justice to me, but what else can a company do? Michtron, 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053, (313)334-5700.

Whitehouse Computer, an advertiser in many magazines and club newsletters, has reportedly closed and filed for bankruptcy. The Williamsport, PA, mail order house specialized in, among other things, Atari software and supplies. Apparently there are over $200,000 worth of claims and about $20,000 in assets at the closing. If you lost money to Whitehouse, you may hear from lawyers with a "cents on the dollar... someday" offer.

Widely reprinted in many club newsletters has been a warning about the "XM-301 time bomb," detailing how bare wires inside the Atari modem caused burned-out interfaces, smoking disk drives, burping computers, and, possibly, constipation in laboratory mice. While the possible problems may be exaggerated considering the low voltage levels and protocols on the serial loop, it certainly is worth a look if you are having any trouble traceable to the presence of the modem. Open the box and look to see if, like some others, you have bare wires showing on the unused leads in the I/O cable. If these leads can touch each other, there could be trouble. Tape anything you find that looks suspicious.

"Phoneside" Chat with Neil Harris

by Pattie Snyder-Rayl

I don't know whether to call this an editorial or an interview -- it's a little of both. I spoke with Neil Harris to confirm/clear-up some "rumors" I heard in the Atari community. Some of those rumors were very negative, and I wished to hear Atari's side of the issues.

I had originally planned a question and answer format, but decided people might need more background on some of the topics. So I explained some of the topics before getting to the "meat" of it all -- Neil Harris's (and through him, Atari's) response. Ready? Here we go...

Walt Wilson, recent Atari VP for U.S. Marketing, left Atari employment due to some internal conflict with the company. Rumor has it he was not very happy with the way Atari does things.

The addition of Walt Wilson, formerly of Apple, to the Atari staff was looked on as a very good move by outsiders. His main responsibility was to set up a strong dealer network for Atari. He attended the Detroit MAGIC show, and I briefly spoke with him there. Wilson said he had a "plan" for Atari's dealer network, and he was beginning the "implementation stage." This doesn't sound to me like a man who was going to be "moving on" this soon!

Unfortunately, Neil Harris declined to speak on this topic. "No comment," was all I could get. I'm glad he was more open to discussion on the rest of my questions or this would've been a short article indeed!

Moving on to new hardware announcements, I asked Neil Harris about the CD ROM drive Atari announced at COMDEX for $650. The drive is a "read only" device which will plug into the DMA port and will work with both the STs and Megas.

According to Harris, the drive may be available in the US as early as the first quarter of 1988. When asked if the drive allowed for "daisy-chaining" of other DMA devices, Harris was uncertain.

As for the storage capacity of the drive, "The drive will be able to store 550 megabytes," Harris said. I replied by saying every account I had read stated Atari had chosen a format which could hold only (and I use the term loosely!) 350 megs. "No," Harris said. "It will hold 550 megs; that's pretty standard."

When asked to comment on a report that a read/write CD drive was up and running on an ST in England -- to be released by an independent company sometime late next year -- Harris said, "I don't believe that's true. There is no way you're going to see a WORM (Write Once, Read Many) drive at a home price in the near future."

This machine will be primarily used as a graphics workstation. As your needs grow, the machine can grow with them.

According to Harris, CD WORM drives typically cost around $15,000! Strange that I have a price quote for an IBM CD WORM drive, about $4,000 for a 400 meg or $5,000 for a 600 meg. Not quite "home price" but....

Since COMDEX, there has been a lot of talk, and some speculation, about Atari's announced "workstation." For those who are unfamiliar with this latest hardware announcement, the workstation will be a 32bit machine running Helios, a UNIX-like operating system.

The hardware is based on the INMOS-800 Transputer, a CPU which uses parallel processor chips for speeds starting at 10 million instructions per second! That's over five times faster than the 68020 chip with math processor and 10 times faster than a PC/AT.

Harris would give no firm release dates or price. Other sources within Atari say production may begin in the spring of '88, and the low-end system would be around $5,000. Low-end consists of a monochrome Mega 2 and Transputer, which plugs directly into the Megas. The transputer can accept up to 16 additional parallel processor chip modules, increasing the speed with each addition!

"This machine will be primarily used as a graphics workstation," said Harris. "And, as your needs grow, the machine can grow with them."

If Atari gets this machine into the market in the next 12-18 months, they may have a shot at beating the MAC II and Suns (from Sun Microsystems) in the graphics workstation market. I know I won't be buying one, but I hope they can pull it off. We'll have to wait and see.

Now, back to something a little closer to us all -- the Megas. When Harris was asked to comment on why the Megas have a fairly high incompatibility rate with existing ST software, he said, "Some people have some funny ideas. Most of the software that doesn't run is copy-protected games, and it's the copy protection causing the problems by making illegal calls, etc., not the software."

I asked Harris about the "Mega Dead List" by Andy Nicola of Futuretronics in Cleveland, Ohio (Mega IV BBS, 216-779-4237, see the November issue of MAM for the actual list.). He said he had seen the list and stated a number of the programs "ran perfectly" on the Mega.

"From personal experience, I have logged many hours playing Silent Service, and I assure you it works just fine," Harris said. "I'm not sure why Andy has put this list together, but some of it is wrong."

Most of the titles on the list are games, as Harris stated, but some of the notable non-games are GFA BASIC 2.0, Dollars and $ense, Pro-Fortran 77, VIP Professional, Magic Sac 4.36, Mark Williams C and Publishing Partner. I have personally seen Publishing Partner running on a Mega, but I did not "test" to see if it ran correctly. Regardless, I think I'll stick with my current ST and just upgrade to 2.5 megs!

As for the Mega/Laser combo, Harris says people will still be able to get the hardware for $3,000. A monochrome Mega 2 retails for $1700 and Atari will be selling the Laser, when it becomes available, for $1995. Adding it up, that comes to $3,695.

When asked if Atari will be expecting dealers to swallow the difference, Harris said, "Yes. Dealers of other computer do it, and it's not that difficult for dealers to do." Hmmm....

Finally, I questioned Harris about messages that appeared on a few California BBSes. The messages claimed Neil Harris, a SysOp on GEnie, had told some paying customers of the network they "would be locked out of the [Atari] Roundtable" if they continued to criticize Atari. Also, some other disgruntled GEnie users have claimed messages of a critical nature are being deleted.

Harris replied "Those statements are absolutely not true. This comes from a six-month-old note, and I wish someone would reprint it. There were a lot of people comparing the ST vs the Amiga. It just went on and on, and was really pointless. There's a separate place on GEnie for this kind of stuff. I sent mail to these people telling them to keep the discussions where they belonged or I would use my powers as SysOp to make sure it gets done. That's all there was to it."

Harris went on to say Atari has about 20 employees with active accounts on GEnie, including people in their Engineering and Technical Support areas. Many of these people don't necessarily leave public messages, but they do send Email to people with questions.

At the end of this "interview," Harris expressed concern over the negative questions. "In my opinion," he said, "these questions seem to be coming from a hostile point of view."

That was not my intent, although I admit the questions I raised were decidedly not cheery! I informed Harris I was simply interested in hearing Atari's response to the "rumors that have been floating around." "Well," Harris said, "I hope this conversation has helped clear-up some of those rumors."

On the Fritz

Hardware Tricks and Tips from Bob Fritz

Q) I own a 520 ST and want to upgrade to 1 Meg. I also want the ability to later upgrade to 2.5 Megs for sure, possibly 4 Megs, without losing the original upgrade. What upgrade would you recommend and why is that one better?

A) I have personally installed two of these type of upgrades, both being able to go from 1 Meg all the way up to 4 Megs depending on your budget. They both are touted as no solder for the 1 Meg version and trace cutting for the 4 Meg version. As for recommending one over the other, I would have to recommend the one from Tech-Specialties over the one from E. Arthur Brown because of the way they pick up the data lines to access the extra ram. That, and the fact you can get an internal clock on the upgrade board as well. Addresses:

Tech-Specialities
909 Hodgkins, Suite A
Houston, Texas
77032
(713) 590-3738

E. Arthur Brown
3404 Pawnee Dr.
Alexandria, MN
56308
(612) 762-8847

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This ad was produced with Publishing Partner and a 24 pin dot matrix printer!

Q) Is it possible to make a detachable keyboard for my 130XE? I think it can be done, but a friend of mine says I'm nuts. How hard would this be to do and what would be involved?

A) First off, it would be possible, but kind of hard, and not very pretty when you are done, as the XE does not have a keyboard processor like the ST. Which means you'd have to have a connecting cable that had 25 lines on it with a connector at each end.

Q) My mouse keeps geting all kinds of junk on the rollers from the rubber ball. What's the best way to clean this stuff off? Is there any way to prevent this buildup? Also, my mouse buttons stick once in a while. Replacing the mouse would cost $50! Is there any way I can get a cheaper replacement?

A) The best way to clean the mouse rollers is to use a cotton swab and isopropol alcohol and a small fingernail file. First, swab the alcohol on the rollers, then take the nail file and carefully scrape them side to side as they turn. Do each roller until you got it all. I used to use a mouse mat with teflon coating, which greatly reduced the crud. I say "used to" because now I'm using a track ball modified to work with the ST so you have a stationary "mouse" and the only thing that touches the ball is your hand. No mouse mat and no need for the room on your desk that a mat takes up, no more moving the mouse from one icon to another only to run out of the mat halfway there! The track ball is $20 cheaper than replacing the mouse also. Address for track ball:

Zebra Systems
78-06 Jamaica Avenue
Woodhaven, NY 11421
(718) 296-2385

P.S. They use Wico track balls so you know they're heavy duty.

Editor's Note: Bob Fritz is a certified Atari service repair person and is president of CP Technologies in Whitmore Lake. This was reprinted from the WAUG November newsletter.

DE-ARCing ST Files with One Single-Sided Disk Drive

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While using the ARC utility to join and squeeze related files into one easy to download file can be a great advantage, it can also create some *very* large files on your disk.

Many of the ARChived files that are available were created by people who are using double-sided disk drives, and thus the final files may be large enough to cause problems for single-sided disk drive owners. The following method of 'UN-ARCing' files onto a single-sided disk drive has been successfully tried with two large ARC file groups, namely: BUBBLES.ARC and XMASDEMO.ARC

When using ARC.TTP, the greatest problem is the inability to re-direct the output of the process onto a different disk from the one the ARChive file resides on. Thus your disk must have enough room free for *both* the ARChived version, *and* the final, normal versions of the files. In many cases, this is not possible.

What saves us in this case is that is is possible to re-direct the input of the 'de-ARCing' process, that is, to take the input from somewhere else. If you use the DCOPY 1.90 utility, you *can* re-direct the output of the de-ARCing process, but you must have two disk drives to do it.

The answer to the dilemma of the single disk drive owner is to create a temporary second disk drive by using a "ram disk" in memory. Here is the step-by-step process for the two large ARChives that were tried, others should follow the same general procedure. Note that it *may* be possible that some ARChived groups just cannot be done at all on a single-sided drive.

First of all, turn off your computer. On a 512K 520ST, you'll need all the RAM you can get. Then boot up, using a disk with *no desk accessories* on it! This is important, to save memory, and because ARC does not seem to like sharing the computer with anything else...!

Next, install a RAMDISK in memory. I use the one called FASTRAM.TTP. If you use that one, install it like this: click on its icon or filename. A dialogue box will appear... type in: d250 (this indicates you

want the RamDisk to be drive D, and want it to be aproximately 250K... this should handle most of the ARChived files we will have... if it is bigger than 250K, indicate a larger number in the dialogue box... much bigger though, and it probably won't fit on a S.S. disk when 'un-ARCed').

The disk drive will spin and you should see a message that a Ram Disk of 250K has been installed. Then the screen should go back to the disktop. Click *once* on the Disk Drive A icon (so it turns black), then go to the OPTIONS menu on the desktop, and click on INSTALL DISK DRIVE.

A dialogue box will open... press the Esc key to erase the disk drive identification letter (it will say A right now), then type in D (do *not* press RETURN here!).. move down and click on the button marked INSTALL in the dialogue box. A new disk drive icon will appear just to the right of the existing ones on the desktop. If you have any windows open, you may have to close them, or move them out of the way to see it. You can then drag the new icon into line with the other disk drive icons.

Your Ram Disk is now installed... Now, put the disk containing the ARChived file which you want to restore to its normal, runnable condition into your disk drive, and copy the file into the Ram Disk. (Don't do anything to the disk containing your original .ARC version of the file until you're certain that the unARCing process was successful, just in case!)

Next, take a blank, formatted disk, and copy the program, ARCX.TTP onto the new disk. (ARCX.TTP is a special version of ARC.TTP, used only for 'De-ARCing' files... it is about half the size of the regular ARC, and can be obtained as part of the ARChive called ARC.ARC, or by itself.

At this point, you should have the ARCed file you want to 'de-ARC' in a Ram Disk called disk drive D, and a new blank disk with only the program ARCX.TTP on it, in your floppy disk drive.

Open the disk drive directory window for drive A, and click on ARCX.TTP. A dialogue box will appear. Type in: D:\XMASDEMO.ARC, then press RETURN. (Of course, substitute the filename of the ARCed file you are processing. For example, you would use D:\BUBBLES.ARC for the Shiny Bubbles demo.)

Your disk drive should start up, and the regular ARC messages should begin appearing on your screen as the 'de-ARChiving' process proceeds. When the process is complete, the program will return to the desktop. You can then delete the ARCX.TTP file from your disk, and you should have a running version of the ARCed file. The Ram Disk will still be in memory, taking up space, and the new disk may not run, so the best way to remove the Ram Disk is to simply turn off the computer and re-boot it.

NOTE: The Shiny Bubbles Demo is *so* big, that it takes a little more work to get 'De-ARCed' properly. The 'De-ARCing' process will halt with an error message: Write fail (disk full?) because there isn't enough room to finish the process with the ARCX.TTP utility still on the disk. However, the huge data file will be intact.

To finish the process, delete the partial file SB.PRG, and ARCX.TTP from your disk. Then remove the disk, and copy the program ARC.TTP from a floppy disk onto the Ram Disk, drive D....

Open the directory window for drive D, and click on ARC.TTP... a dialogue window will open.. now type: xh BUBBLES.ARC SB.PRG. Note the spaces between the filenames. You're telling ARC.TTP to *extract and hold the display,* from the ARChived file BUBBLES.ARC, ONE of the files that are contained in the ARC, in this case SB.PRG.

This will deARC *only* the SB.PRG file from the ARC file, *into the ramdisk!* Once the process is finished, replace the disk with the Bubbles Demo files in your disk drive, and copy the file SB.PRG onto the disk from the RamDisk. That should give you a running copy of the Shiny Bubbles demo, on a single-sided disk.

This technique can be used for other large ARCs. It may take a little experimentation, or moving of files between disks, but generally, it *can* be done.

Also, these techniques only cover the very basic operations involved in using the ARC utilities. There are GEM based 'shell' programs which make all of the steps a lot easier to use, but which take up memory and disk space which may be needed on a minimal system to be able to unARC a large file at all.

The DCOPY.190 utility can also be used to unARC files between a Ram Disk and a single disk drive, but again, it takes up memory. It's a long process, but just think of all the money you've saved on downloading connect time charges... money you can put toward purchase of a double-sided drive!

Building a Replacement XL\XE Power Supply

By Don Neff (MACE)

THE PROJECT

Some time ago, I wrote an article describing how to troubleshoot and repair your Atari power supply. At the time that article was written, Atari was using a two-tone (coffee and cream) power supply which was easily disassembled by removing four screws. As soon as the article was published, Atari switched to a black, sealed power supply which was not repairable. To make matters even worse, this new power supply has a higher failure rate than the old two-tone power supply. This article provides you with the information you need to build a new power supply for your XL or XE. Figure 1 shows the schematic circuit of the new power supply.

THE ADVANTAGES

The power supply you are going to build will be better than your original from Atari. First, it's easily repaired if a problem develops. Second, it's heavily filtered to help eliminate interference on your monitor screen. Third, it has self contained surge protection to prevent damaging voltage spikes. Fourth, and of special interest to SysOps, the power supply can provide back-up power through very short power loses (the type that make your house lights flicker but not go out). Fifth, if someone expresses an interest in it, I can show you how to modify the circuit to provide battery back-up power through a lengthy power outage.

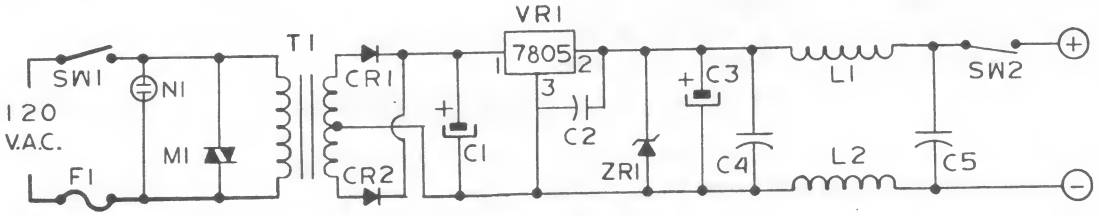

FIGURE ONE

CONSTRUCTION

Resist the temptation to use a printed circuit board, and instead, use point-to-point wiring on the mounting lugs to construct this circuit. Begin by marking and drilling all the holes for the mounting screws, cords, and switches. Next, mount the transformer at the rear of the box with two 4-40x1/4 machine screws and nuts. Install the lug tie strips in convenient locations in the remaining space by using one 4-40x1/4 machine screw and nut for each strip. VR1 must be attached to the side of the box using a 4-40x1/4 machine screw and nut. Gently bend the legs of VR1 away from the metal of the box to avoid the possibility of shorts. Now, construct the circuit as shown in Figure 1. Pay special attention to the polarity of capacitors C1, C3, diodes CR1, CR2, ZR1 and the leg numbering sequence of VR1 (see Figure 2). C2 should be attached directly to legs 2 and 3 of VR1. The leads of C2 should be as short as possible.

FIGURE TWO

If you are replacing an existing Atari power supply, you should cut the two power cords off of it for use on this new power supply. Otherwise, you must buy the plug and cords shown in the parts list. The plug in the list is a five pin plug which is similar to the Atari seven pin plug shown in Figure 3.

Unfortunately, this five pin plug is identical to the Atari video plug for your monitor signal. If you accidentally put the power supply plug in the video jack, you will almost certainly damage your computer when you switch the power on. Therefore, you should label both of these plugs at this time to avoid getting them confused with one another later.

Cut the AC plug off of one the Radio Shack two-wire line cords and replace it with the five-pin plug. Connect one wire to the two pins on one side of the plug and the other wire to the two pins on the opposite side. No connection is made to the fifth pin at the bottom.

Figure 3 shows the reassembled plug as if you are looking at the pins and the wire is extending away in

FIGURE THREE

looling at the pins and the wire is extending away in front of you. The wire connected to the pins on your Left should be connected to SW2 at the point identified with a "+" in Figure 1. The wire connected to the pins on the right of Figure 3, should be connected to the junction of L2 and C5. Do not connect this wire to the case or to a ground. Doing so will disable the interference filter.

THE CIRCUIT

M1 is a Metal Oxide Varistor (MOV) which provides the surge protection. It works by providing a short circuit to excessive voltages (such as surges). An extended period of high voltage will cause the MOV to fail and become a permanent short circuit to protect your computer. This, in turn, will blow fuse F1 to protect your house wiring. If, in the future, you find that F1 has failed and all replacement fuses also fail quickly, you should suspect that M1 is bad and replace it. N1 is a neon pilot light which also contributes slightly to the surge protection.

CR1, CR2 and C1 rectify the AC to DC. Your voltmeter should indicate approximately nine volts DC across C1.

VR1 is a five-volt regulator. VR1 will get hot and must be attached to the metal case to provide a heat sink.

ZR1 is a Zener diode which provides over-voltage protection in case VR1 fails. Remember that zener diodes are mounted in reverse polarity compared to standard diodes. If your voltmeter shows less than three volts across C3, you probably have ZR1 installed wrong.

C3 is a five-volt storage capacitor which acts like a battery. C1 and C3 will keep your computer running through those momentary power outages we mentioned earlier. SysOps may want to extend this power back-up capability by adding more C1's and C3's. Just add the additional capacitors in parallel to the ones shown in Figure 1. The more you add, the longer your computer will run without power. But, keep in mind that for the price of several extra capacitors you could install battery back-up instead. C4, C5, L1, and L2 provide filtering to reduce electrical noise. SW2 is an optional momentary switch to provide cold reboots without wear and tear on your console switch.

Reassemble the power supply case, making sure there are no loose wires touching the case metal. Use your voltmeter to check for five volts DC across the plug, with polarity as shown in Figure 3. If everything checks out ok, you can plug this new power supply into your computer and become an Atarian again.

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

This article and many of my other Atari service/construction articles are in the public domain. Any user group may reproduce my articles for free. I would appreciate receiving a complimentary copy of your newsletter containing my article. I also welcome your comments and suggestions concerning my Atari articles. You may contact me by writing to: Don Neff, Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 2785, Southfield, Michigan, 48037.

PARTS LIST

Item	Description	Radio Shack#
C1	4700uF Cap.	272-1022
C20	.1uF Tant.	272-1432
C30	.1F Cap.	276-1440
C4,5	47pF Cap.	272-121
CR12	3 Amp Rect.	276-1141
F11	Amp Fuse	270-1250
L12	100uH Choke	273-102
M1	MOV	276-568
N1	Neon Pilot	272-712
SW1	AC Switch	276-602
SW2	Momentary Sw.	275-619
T1	Transformer	273-1511
VR1	5 Volt Reg.	276-1770
ZR1	Zener Diode	276-561

MISCELLANEOUS

–	5 Lug Strips	274-688
–	Case	270-253
–	Console Plug	274-003
–	Fuse Holder	270-362
–	Line Cords	278-1255
–	Machine Nuts	64-3018
–	Machine Screws	64-3011
–	Strain Relief	278-1636

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- o IBM PC-DOS or Compaq MS-DOS version 3.2 or above recommended
- o ATARI COLOR MONITOR (Atari mono monitor support will be released this Fall)
- o optional 5.25-inch drive is required to use 5.25-inch disks
- o 3.5-inch 720K DOS disks require a double-sided drive (Atari SF314 or equivalent)

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Yes! Please send information on pc-ditto.
Name_____
Address_____
City_____State____Zip_____

ST Notes

By LeRoy Valley (TAG)

This month is going to be very short and sweet since I'm under the ax. (This baby has to be done in about 15 minutes!!)

If you haven't seen Spectrum 512 you're really missing something! This program is as far beyond Degas Elite as Degas was beyond Neochrome! The pictures are stunning. And to top it off, Trio Engineering (the creators of Spectrum 512) are offering a product called Digispec.

This desktop accessory converts your Computereyes pictures into 512 color pictures! AND it has the capability of producing 29 shades for each color thus giving you over 14,000 colors in a digitized picture. This accessory makes bad looking pictures look like photographs. (No, I'm not kidding.) Available from Trio Engineering for $34.95. Spectrum 512 is *not* required to use Digispec.

I just bought an Indus GTS-100 3.5" disk drive, and it is quiet! So quiet in fact, that you can't hear the heads step. The drive is small and seems to perform satisfactorily. It is a bit quicker than my SF-314, and the on-board track readout is slick. Now as long as Future Systems stays around...

ProCopy version 1.50 is now shipping and can backup virtually everything on the market. Even new programs like Air Ball, Trail Blazer, and Plutos can now be backed up. If you need a backup program, I still say that Procopy is the way to go!

You've got Publishing Partner 1.02 and can't load in more than 8 fonts at a time? Send in your disks and get 1.03...the problem is fixed!

Well that's it. My 15 minutes are about up. Next month I promise to review Font Partner v1.1, a fantastic utility for making and editing fonts for Publishing Partner! Until next month...

Eight Bits' Worth

By Gordon Totty (MACE)

The August issue of ABACUS, the newsletter of the Atari Bay Area Computer Users' Society (San Francisco), contained an interesting article by Charles Cherry. Cherry reviewed the Antic Catalog for us. I paid particular attention to his views because he is a former Product Manager for the catalog; also, he writes for Antic, and does occasional projects for the catalog. Some might consider him biased; I felt I was getting good "inside" advice from a fellow user group member. He especially liked the following products:

Colorspace -- weird, wonderful, "best demonstration of what Atari graphics can do," "should be required for all Atari owners." I have ordered this on his say-so, but it is no longer listed in the catalog, and so I do not know if I will get it. Cherry did not comment on the incredible shrinking Antic 8Bit catalog, which has been apparent over the past few months.

Creative Process -- the only outline processor for the Atari, and recommended for research papers and other writing where outlining is helpful. The catalog lists this for $19.95, and warns stock is limited.

Envision -- "Ok, it's a font editor. We never said that out loud at Antic. But, it really is more than that. Buy it, even if you already have 12 font editors. Buy it, even if you don't know what a font editor is. Some day, you'll thank me." My copy is on order, Charles. I'll be happy if this is half as good as you think it is. List, as available, $19.95.

Seven Card Stud, Cribbage -- "Everyone should have some card games on their computer. These are my nominations." Neither is listed in the latest catalog.

Charles Cherry probably wrote his article in June; I'm writing in early November. You can see that the catalog has shrunk. By the way, all of the items listed above were given four-stars by Cherry. His three-star recommendations are listed below.

Rambrandt -- "The most powerful drawing package for the Atari." $19.95.

Solid Object Module -- A 3-D modeler for Rambrandt. $15.95.

Orbit, A trip to the Moon -- I have this one in my collection, and will try to let you know what I think

of it when I get around to using it. At a glance, it looks like a very serious simulation. The author, John Reagh, is a Lockheed aerospace engineer. It's $15.95 at present; I think it used to cost more.

Blue Team Bridge -- "The best Bridge game on the Atari." $15.95

Colossus Chess 3.0 -- "No longer the most powerful game on the Atari, but I think it is the most playable. If you are serious about chess, get Colossus." I have the old Atari chess cartridge, and more recently obtained The Chessmaster 2000. So, I'll pass on this, even though it is listed as a catalog best seller at $15.95.

The Rhythm Composer -- a drum machine. I couldn't find it listed, but sometimes, the bi-focals let me down. To order Colorspace, I called the toll-free number, and got the item number from the person who answered. You might want to try that.

Spell Magic -- a spelling checker. Works with PaperClip and AtariWriter. $19.95.

Printer Driver Construction Set -- "Best of its kind." Requires AtariWriter cartridge. I almost bought this when my Mannesmann Tally Spirit 80 and I were not getting along. I switched to AtariWriter Plus instead. $19.95.

Astrology -- I couldn't find it listed.

Floating Point Package and Extended DDT -- "...get this now, it's a steal." These work with MAC/65 and are sold as a package for $19.95.

The Dragon's Tail -- "I'm responsible for putting this into the catalog. It is eccentric and poorly organized, but, it is unique and undeniably powerful. If you program in BASIC, you will find much to like here, and some to hate." Such honesty from Charles Cherry sent me right to my order blank. I've got to see this one. Presently listed in the bargain section for $5.95, was $24.95.

Amis xm10.bbs from MACE -- "A first rate bulletin board for the Atari 300 baud modem." Golly, one from us! Public domain, $10.

130XE Hi-Res Designer -- Not that great, according to Cherry, but it is the only mode 8 paint program available. It works only on the 130XE. Public domain, $10.

Trivia Quiz -- Public Domain, $10.

Personal Finance and Education -- Public Domain. I couldn't find this listed.

If I counted correctly, Charles Cherry gave five items a four-star rating, and gave three stars to 15 items. Eight items received two stars. Seven items got one star. Four items got no star. To illustrate his objectivity, I should point out that one star was defined by him as "forget it." No stars were given to products he knew nothing about.

I own Earth Views, which got two stars ("A good value for the money."). I agree this is not a three or four star product. The Family Tree, which I got because I wanted some kind of genealogy program, got one star. I probably should have forgotten it; I could have done as well just using Syncalc spreadsheet to record the data. So, my personal experience seems to line up with Charles Cherry's recommendations.

I think he wrote an excellent review which performed a valuable service. As he pointed out, some of the catalog stuff is well worth owning, but you hear very little about it. First, Antic does not review it in their pages, nor do competitor magazines. People might buy more of this software if they knew more about it.

Also in August, Chy-Wy-Tari (Cheyenne, Wyoming) published a neat bit of humor, which I hope I may reproduce here. Their newsletter is silent on the subject of copying; most letters say it is ok to copy anything as long as you give credit. Somebody let me know if we go to war with Wyoming over this. If so, I'm heading for cover; the Marlboro Man lives out thataway somewhere!

Computer Quiz
Compiled By Big Al

Here is a simple quiz to test your computing position. Answer each one YES or NO, and compare your answers to the rating at the bottom!

1) Do most of your friends have computers?
2) Do you use your computer every day?
3) Have you ever forgotten what someone was telling you while you were using your computer?
4) Have you ever eaten cold dinner or missed dinner because you were computing?
5) Have you ever spent more than you could afford on computer items?
6) Were the last five books you read about computers?

→

7) Have you ever taken over parts of your house just so the computer has enough room to work in?
8) Have you ever lost sleep because you were using the computer?
9) Are most of the gifts you receive related to computers?
10) Have you ever lied to get out of doing something so there is more time to compute?

This highly unscientific test was designed to be funny, so don't be worried if it did not make much sense. The results show if you answered yes to five or less questions, you are either still normal or you just bought the system last week. Between five and eight yes's means you should look for treatment of your addiction. Nine or ten positive responses and you are hooked just like the rest of us, and you might as well make the best of it.

(End of excerpt.)

The Wyoming group credited Big Al of the BRACE/S*P*A*C*E/STARBASE group with originating this gem. How did you do? I can answer yes to eight of these, maybe nine. I get the score that high by using a little judgement. For example, I don't use my computer EVERY day. I do't take it on vacation with me, and some days I stay away from it in the interest of domestic peace and harmony. But I WANT to use it every day, so I give myself half of a yes on that one. Now, do you suppose a real computer fanatic *does* take the computer on vacation, if he/she goes on vacation, and uses the computer *every day,* spouse be damned?

The real humor was in the next piece where a computer fanatic named Calamity Jane explained her answers to the quiz. And so, excerpted from "More on the Computer Quiz," by Calamity Jane, are the following selected answers.

3) That is one problem with computers. You get so tuned in to them you completely ignore what is going on around you. A statement must be said three times before it is heard. That is why my old man and I communicate via Email.... The sight of blood will ususally catch the computing person's attention.

4) I have burned dinner several times. Start dinner, sit down at the ST and totally space it out! I ate a totally black chicken once! And I know the fine art of balancing the plate on my lap.... Guess I need a hot plate down here. A small refrigerator is next. Then I never have to leave.

5) I always spend more money on the computer than I should. But, what the hay. It takes top priority. I would rather have disks than eat.... Poor kid, goes to without BASICs like shoes. She had to wear roller skates to school once, cause her shoes blew out, and I had blown all the money on a new disk drive. I lucked out once again – it was Halloween!

8) Sleep? What is sleep? You should have seen me explaining to my old man, one morning at six, that I wasn't up early, I hadn't been to bed yet!

9) All of the gifts I buy or receive are for the computers. If I can't buy you something for your computer, forget it. You get nothing! I forgot how to buy clothes a long time ago....

10) I will do nearly anything to make more time to compute. I never fold the laundry anymore... just dig it out of the dryer. Food is zapped in the microwave, or a check is shoved at a pizza guy at 12:33 a.m. I am forgetting the spoken version of the English Language, but boy, can I type! I don't waste time running upstairs to get coffee, that baby comes down to me! Toilet paper never gets put on the roller-thing anymore; the neighbors forgot my name; I am forgetting how to drive, cook, write with a pen and paper, but boy, do I know FLASH! Priorities! You just got to get your priorities straight. I named the dog Shamus. The two cats are Packy and Zaxxon. My Mom told me it was a good thing I had already filled out the birth certicicate on the kid, or the poor thing would of gone through life explaining her name.

(End of excerpt.)

Well, guys, which of you still believes there is no such thing as a perfect wife? Hats off to Calamity Jane! Do you get the feeling she has forgotten the name of "the kid?"

Miss Calamity, ma'am, I have read your stuff before, and I shore do enjoy it! I hope you forgive the heavy editing, but I can only type so much on an empty stomach. I think I ate once when the sun was up. Or was that the moon? Whatever.

One more newsletter, and we'll close this out for this month. This is a plug for another user group. Free advertising for the Boston Computer Society. This month, I was fortunate enought to read the "Jackintosh Boston User Group" newsletter, aka J-Bug. This is an ST publication, so this piece of the piece is 16Bits' worth. This newsletter was 87 pages long, a whopper. It can be yours for $35 a year, less if you're a full-time student, a youth or a senior citizen. There's more. You will also get the Computer Update Magazine, a calendar newsletter, a BCS

buying guide, membership in 51 user and interest groups, admission to over 1,000 meetings and events, use of the BCS Resource Center and Library, discounts from more than 300 companies, access to electronic bulletin boards, public domain software, telephone support and referrals, and admission to The Computer Museum in Boston. Sounds like a lot, and makes you want to move to Boston, doesn't it? Of course, without living in the Boston area, you cannot take advantage of all this, and a lot of it is available through our very own group.

I left something else out. You get to pick two BCS newsletters of your choice, like J-Bug, mentioned above, and A-Bug for Atari 8Bit users. Or, Amiga, Apple, Commodore, CP/M, or any two of 37 newsletters. If two is not enough, you can have as many as you want for $4 each per year for all over two.

There is one fly in this lovely ointment. I can't tell you how often these newsletters are published, but J-Bug is not published monthly. The issue I saw was Summer '87 (quarterly?), and there was a Jan/Feb '86 issue, as well as a Mar/Apr '86 issue (bi-monthly? A random event?). I don't know, but you can find out by writing to the Boston Computer Society, One Center Plaza, Boston, MA 02108, or call 617-367-8080. Looks to me like a "downtown" kind of organization. Now, don't go drop MACE! I'm sure you have a longer drive to Boston than to Southfield.

ST Filetypes & Filename Extensions: What Needs What to Run?

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There are many different types of files available for the ST from BBSes, on-line services, and user group software libraries, some of which are ready-to-run programs, but many of which require some kind of preparation before they can be used.

Generally the description in the software library or the documentation that comes with the program will tell you if the file or program needs any special treatment, or if any other files are required. The most important indicator of what the file is though, is the "Filename Extension."

The Atari ST computer allows disk files to have names consisting of up to eight letters or numbers, and an Extension consisting of three more letters or numbers. The name is separated from the extension by a period:

FILENAME.EXT MEGAROID.PRG

You can't use spaces or most other characters in the filenames. You *can* use the underline character to separate words if you wish:

GAME_1.PRG HI_SCOR.DAT

Usually, the name will tell you what the file is, and the extension will tell you what type of file it is. There are three types of files which can be run on the Atari ST computer directly:

.PRG .TOS .TTP

.PRG Files are generally programs which use Gem (windows, menus and the mouse). You run these programs by double clicking on their icon or filename from an open directory window.

.TOS Files are generally programs which do *not* use the Gem desktop. You run them the same way as .prg files.

.TTP Files are special versions of TOS programs which need certain input from you before they can run (TTP means TOS Takes Parameters). When you run these programs by clicking on them, a dialogue box will open on the screen and you can type the needed information on a line in the box. You will need to know, either from the file description in the software library, or from reading the documentation for the program, what to type for a particular program.

Note that while these programs will *run* on the ST, they may need other files on the same disk with them to work properly. The file description or documentation should tell you if other files are required.

Files which might be required by a program include:

.RSC .DAT .PIC

.RSC Files are resource files used by Gem programs, and contain information needed by the program to run. The .RSC file *must* be on the same disk as the .PRG file, and must have the same filename as the .PRG file:

MEGAROID.PRG MEGAROID.RSC

.DAT Files are data files, to be used by other programs. You might see these called .D8A files occasionally. They generally must be on the same disk as the program which will use them.

.PIC Files are PICTURE files which are loaded onto the screen by the program being run. Again, these generally must be on the same disk as the program.

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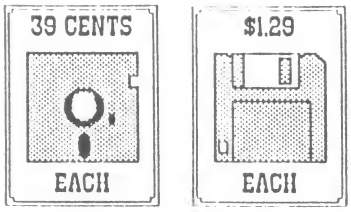

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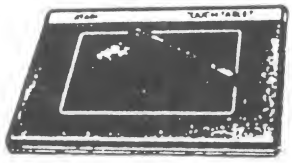

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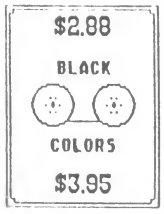

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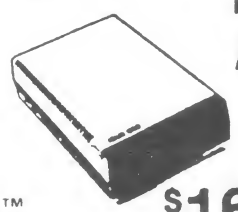

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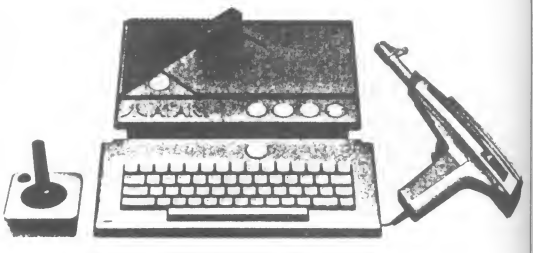


There may be other types of files required to run a program, but these are the most common ones. If you find a file with an unusual EXTENSION, it's possible that it is one of these required files.

There is a special form of programs for the Atari ST, called ACCessories. These are programs which are loaded into the computer's memory when the computer is first turned on, and remain there, ready to be used from within other Gem based programs. ACCessories may include calculators, clocks, notepads and other useful applications. They allow you to switch to other functions without leaving the program you are running. There are even game accessories which allow you to play games while you're supposed to be working with spreadsheets or word processors...!

To load an accessory, copy it onto the disk you use when you first turn on your computer. Up to six accessories can be on this disk, allowing up to six choices of accessories in your programs. Note that accessories take up memory in your computer, which will decrease the amount of memory available to other programs. Accessories are identified by the Filename Extension:

.ACC

Another common type of file is one which contains text or documentation in a readable form:

.TXT .DOC READ.ME

Generally these will be information or instructions needed to run a program. These files can usually be read directly from the desktop by clicking on their icon or filename, and selecting SHOW from the alert box which pops up on the screen. You can also usually print these files on your printer by selecting PRINT from the same alert box.

The READ.ME file is usually included on a program disk or as part of a group of files to give you important information about new features or updates. You *should* read it before trying to use the program!

Note that the files created by word processors may NOT be readable from the desktop SHOW function because of the special formats they save the text with. One example is files identified with a .STW extension. These are created with the STWriter program, and need to be loaded back into that word processor to be read or printed.

Also note that files created with the Publishing Partner desktop publishing program have a .DOC (Document) extension, but are *not* readable from the SHOW option of Gem.

At times, programs may come with files containing the original 'source code' that was used to write the program. These files are usually not necessary to just run the program, and are only of interest if you would like to see how the program was written, or if you would like to modify the program.

These source code or programming files are generally identified:

.C .MOD .PAS .ASM .H .SRC

Programs written in certain languages, such as BASIC or LOGO cannot be run by themselves. They need to have the language itself loaded into the computer and run first, then the actual program can be loaded and run by the language. These programs are identified:

.BAS .LOG

Note that there are now several different BASIC languages in use on the ST, and the programs for each of them are generally not interchangeable with other kinds of BASIC. The description of the file in the software library should tell you which BASIC language you will need to run the program.

MUSIC AND GRAPHICS FILES

There are several kinds of files for various music and graphics programs available in software libraries. In most cases, the filename extension will help identify the kind of program you will need to use to display the picture, or play the music.

.SNG Currently, the most popular music program seems to be The Music Studio from Activision. The great majority of music files available require the use of the Music Studio program to play. There is as yet *no public domain* player program for these song files. You must first load and run your Music Studio program, then load and play the .SNG files.

.NEO This identifies a file as a picture drawn using Atari's NEOchrome drawing program. These files are always in *low r*esolution, and may contain 'color rotation' animation effects. NEOchrome files are always contain 32128 bytes. NEOchrome pictures can be displayed by loading them into the NEOchrome program, or by using one of several picture display programs. One good choice is EFFETS.PRG.

→

.PI1 This is a low resolution picture drawn using the Degas drawing program. Degas pictures are always 32034 bytes long. You can use Degas itself to display the pictures, or a display program. DEGASPIC.PRG is a good stand-alone viewer program to use.

.PI2 This is a *medium* resolution Degas picture.

.PI3 This is a *high* resolution Degas picture.

.PC1 These are drawings done with the Degas Elite drawing program, and saved .PC2 in compressed format. They correspond to the same resolutions as the .PC3 Degas files with the same number in the filename extension. Because they are compressed, they will be smaller files than the normal Degas files. The actual number of bytes will depend on the complexity of the picture. Both compressed and uncompressed Degas Elite pictures can be displayed by using SHOWPIC2.PRG.

.TNY This indicates a picture which has been compressed using Dave Mumper's Tinystuff program, and is referred to as tiny format. These pictures can be either NEOchrome or Degas originally. If the original picture was a NEOchrome drawing with color rotation animation, the animation effects will be preserved in the .TNY file. To display tiny format pictures, use TINYVIEW.TN1. These are picture files compressed with Dave Mumper's new TINYSTUFF2 .TN2 system. Use TNYVIEW2 to view them. .TN3.

SUMMARY OF FILETYPES

.PRG Runnable GEM program .TOS Runnable TOS program .TTP Runnable program which requires input

.RSC Resource file required to be on the disk with its .PRG program .DAT Data file used by a program .PIC Picture file used by a program

.TXT Readable text file .DOC Readable Documentation (instructions) file

.C .MOD .PAS .ASM .SRC Source Code files for programmers

.BAS BASIC program. Requires a BASIC Language to be loaded first .LOG LOGO program. Requires LOGO language to be loaded first

.SNG Music Studio music file. Requires Activision's Music Studio program

.NEO NEOchrome drawing. Use EFFETS.PRG to view

.PI1 .PI2 .PI3 Degas drawing. Use DEGASPIC.PRG to view

.PC1 .PC2 .PC3 Compressed DEGAS Elite drawing. Use SHOPIC2.PRG to view

.TNY Compressed TINY format picture. Use TINYVIEW.PRG to view

.TN1 .TN2 .TN3 Compressed TINY2 format picture. Use TNYVIEW2.PRG to view

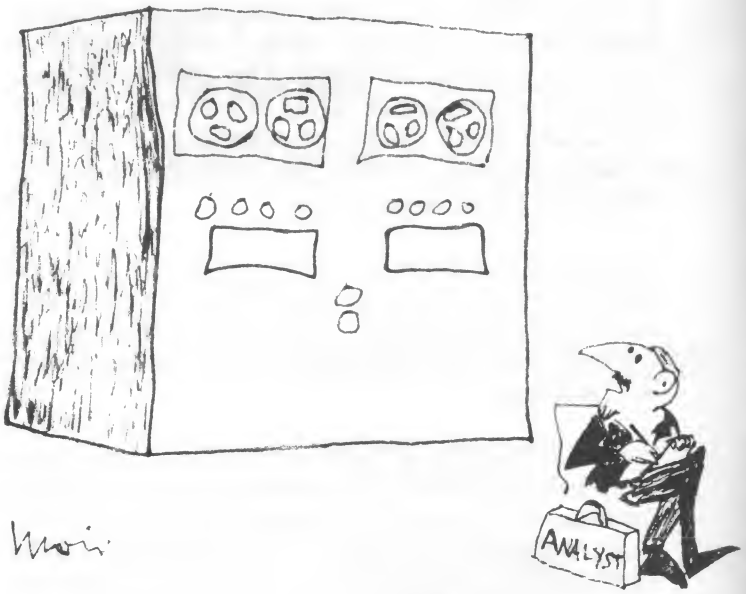
.ARC ARChived file. Use ARC.TTP or ARCX.TTP to restore

.PQ1 .TQT .PQG SQUeezed files (indicated by 'Q' in extension). Use EZSQUEEZE.PRG to etc restore

.LBR LIBraried group of files. Use DELIB.TTP to restore files

.SCR Entire disk SCRunched into one file. Use SCRUNCH.PRG or CRUNCH.PRG to restore

.LQR SQUeezed LIBrary of files. Use EZSQUEEZE.PRG first, then DELIB.TTP



"... and when did you start feeling threatened by mini-computers?"

COMDEX News: Atari's Transputer

By Chuck McManis, courtesy Bob Retelle

This article from Usenet was posted in the GEnie Atari area...

Priced well below Mac II base-level price, the Transputer is aimed at 1000 pounds according to Jack Lang. For now, they will provide a set of three manuals (user manual, developers' manual and technical manual) for 50 pounds. You then become a registered developer, and get a priority place in the queue for developers' hardware in December.

I was at Comdex and talked to Jack Lang, Tim King, and Jessica Lang at length about this box. What I found out was quite enlightening to say the least. Let me say this first: this is a really neat machine!! Then let me say this second: it ain't cheap. When you configure it like a workstation, it costs like a workstation. So, before I go on, let's add some numbers to these statements.

At the show, the Perihelion folks were saying $2000 for the ABAQ (Ay-bak), and you need a Mega ST as well ($1700 to $3000 depending on which one you have) and a monitor displaying the images you're interested in. That's another $500 to $3000, where $500 gets you a Multisync and $3000 gets you the Multisync II Plus, which can display 1K X 800 pixels. Also, you really need a hard drive, so add another $600 to $1500 depending on size (20-40 MEG). So, minimum we're talking is $5000 to get a low-res, color system with a 20 MEG hard drive, and up to $8000 for a 40 Meg High-res system--which is still cheaper than either a Mac II or a Color Sun.

When the "real" machines become available, the ST will be optional (and hopefully they will have redesigned the clunky case), but Perihelion was murmuring $5000 without monitor or hard drive.

So, those of you who want a workstation for the cost of an Amiga or ST will have to wait a few more years for the technology steamroller to get a little further down the road.

As for the machine, it was running some neat demos primarily showing off its color capabilities. Since they were "canned" images being replayed via Show-Anim or some other framebuffer animator, it was not clear how fast the actual machines were. One was running GEM on a 19" 1K X 1K monochrome desktop. Unfortunately, most GEM applications couldn't really hack the huge screen.

I would be interested to know if Atari will be supporting both GEM and Helios on the machines (all the really good questions hit you after you've left the booth!). From the looks of it, it did not appear likely. The Perihelion people were quick to point out the slaved Mega was only providing I/O services and none of its memory was being used by the ABAQ. So I assume if you want to run GEM, you would either emulate the 68000 or use a version of TOS in ROM that passed all video requests on to the ABAQ.

Other interesting tidbits: the video memory (1 Meg of video RAM) was separate from the ABAQ's program memory (shown with 4 Meg). The internal slots will accept boards with additional transputer chips--or memory--on them, so you could continue to beef up this thing. And while some of the demos were written in OCCAM (INMOS's transputer language), Perihelion is going to support C as the primary development language (what no BCPL?). It also had a custom blitter that apparently was really fast. However, only the demos were available, so I couldn't really test drive it all that well.

Overall, it looks like an interesting box, and is probably going to excite a lot of graphics folks. I don't see a whole lot of them making it into the home market or the ever-lucrative business market. If Inmos, producers of the Inmos-800 Transputer, has really conquered its manufacturing problems and the UNIX-like Helios operating system lives up to its advance billing, this should be worth a look, at least.

And while there were boxes to look at at the show, I know that more than half the work will be in the software. So things to watch for:

1) How Atari "positions" this product. Depending on when it gets out the door, it will be competing with 386/486 boxes, Mac IIs, and low-end Suns.

2) What happens to the various ST owners. (In my opinion they should split their product line like the Apple II/Macintosh computers are truly separate.)

3) Messages from people who have machines to play with of their own. (I am, of course, available for Beta Testing!)

This was one of the more interesting aspects of an otherwise PC/386/Laser Printer-dominated show. (These opinions are my own and noone else's, but you knew that didn't you?)

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221 B Baker Street

Reprinted from The Roughwriter, Submitted by Gordon Totty (MACE)

The Adventure of the Floppy Disk: A Review of 221 B Baker Street By Dave Arlington (with apologies to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!)

It was a sweltering, hot day in our little flat at 221 B Baker Street. Holmes and I were just considering hailing a hansom cab to the cooler confines of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Regent's Park when our landlady, Mrs. Hudson, announced we had a visitor.

A gentleman of some distinction rushed into our flat. "Begging your pardon, Mr. 'olmes, but I've something 'ere that I thought you would want to see right away!"

Holmes waved a hand, and said to our guest, "Pray, sit down, my good man, and tell me all about the Atari 8Bit game from DataSoft that you have."

It would be quite a contest as to [who had] the more amazed look -- our guest or myself. "Really, Holmes," I exclaimed. "Surely this borders on some sort of psychic abilities on your part! He made no mention of any sort of thing!"

Holmes had a bemused look of contentment on his face as he started to explain. "Really, nothing of the sort, Watson. Just start at the source, and the inexorable flow of logic will eventually carry you to your destination. "Let me demonstrate. This article is appearing in an Atari computer publication. Therefore, I reasoned it had something to do with Atari computers. The gentleman's obvious superior breeding sets him apart as an 8Bit owner, and the callus on the inside of his right thumb is obviously from a joystick, not a mouse. So, I asked myself, what good news could an 8Bit owner have for me that could not wait?

"Surely Atari could not have released any of their vaporware hardware products. Therefore, it had to be software. I next queried of myself, who is still releasing exciting new software for the Atari 8Bit machines? With titles like Alternate Reality: the Dungeon, Mercenary, Theatre Europe, Video Title Shop and more, I assumed, obviously correctly, this was another new offering from DataSoft."

Having thoroughly cuckolded me again, we settled down to try this new piece of entertainment. Holmes booted up his trusty 130XE sitting next to the memento from "The Adventure of the Dropped Bit." 221 B Baker Street was the name of the software, and it is based on a popular board game by John Hansen and Co. Each player took the part of a different character. Holmes and I played ourselves, respectively, while our new-found friend found himself as Inspector LeStrade, and Mrs. Hudson filled in as Irene Adler. I thought I saw some slight discomfort on Holmes's part at her inclusion in the game, but couldn't be sure.

After a disappointingly brief game, which, of course, was won by Holmes, he asked me what my opinion of the game was.

"Well, Holmes, to be quite frank, it is almost an exact copy of the board game, including the simulated rolling of a die. The characters move to different locations in London acquiring clues to some one of the thirty cases that are included. The cases are very interesting, and the players are asked to discover different things each time, such as who did it, with what, and for what reason. Players can lock locations from other player with keys from the locksmith and unlock them with badges from Scotland Yard. When players think they have a solution, they return to 221 B Baker Street, where they are given a multiple choice quiz to determine if they have the right answers.

"While I do think it is an excellent adaptation of the board game, it does cost almost twice as much. I think the question is whether it is really worth twice the price to get a computerized version of the board game."

Holmes chuckled and said, "As usual, Watson, you see, but do not observe. The computerized version has many enhancements to the board game. Being able to play a main characters from one of your trifling stories, for instance. The animated graphics are very well done, and at any time you can call up a map of the whole city. Even you must admit, Watson, a slight chill in the spine when you heard the speech synthesis of my voice come over the monitor saying, 'Quick, Watson. The game is afoot!'

"But, most interesting, is the fact they've included some changes that would have even made the board game better. Players must now have a badge from Scotland Yard to enter 221 B Baker Street at the end of the game. This makes their use a little more judicious in game play. They've added two secret passages that take you to random locations that might vastly help or hinder you. Best of all, clues can be either printed on the screen, as they are, or in

one of twenty different secret codes. You know how I love cryptography, Watson, and now I can practice it in game play. This method of clue-giving is a vast improvement over both the board game and other computer mystery games that have been available for other computers before, such as Murder by the Dozen."

"You mean...," I stammered.

"Yes, Watson. This is an excellent entertainment value for anyone who enjoys these small matters of interest. I heartily recommend it. But now, Watson, I must relax. If you would be so kind as to hand me my..."

"Violin?" I interrupted.

Of course not, Watson! My Star Raiders cartridge!!"

Bits of BASIC

Using the console keys on your Atari XL/ XE

Memory location CONSOL (53279, $D01F) is used to test the condition of the START, SELECT or OPTION keys. By PEEKing into this location, you can tell if any combination of these keys are currently being depressed by the user. NOTE: This *does not* include the RESET or HELP keys.

This little routine will demonstrate how to observe CONSOL from within your BASIC program:

```
10 X=PEEK(53279)
20 PRINT X
30 GOTO 10
```

Running this program will make your computer repeatedly print "7" at the left margin of your screen.

Now, by pressing various combinations of the START, SELECT, and OPTION keys, you should see the following values returned from CONSOL:

Values	Keys pressed
0	OPTION/SELECT/START
1	OPTION/SELECT
2	OPTION/START
3	OPTION
4	SELECT/START
5	SELECT
6	START
7	none

An example of how CONSOL is used from within a BASIC program might look like this:

```
10 X=PEEK(53279):IF X=7 THEN GOTO 10:REM
   The program will "loop" and appear to do
   nothing until a console key is pressed.
20 IF X=6 THEN GOTO 100:REM If START is
   pressed then proceed to Main Program.
30 IF X=3 THEN NEW:END:REM  If OPTION
   then program halts and memory is cleared.
40 IF X=5 THEN GOTO 200:REM  If SELECT then
   display Instructions.
50 GOTO 10:REM If none of the above then try
   again.
100 **********************
110 ** Main Program here **
120 **********************
200 ----------------------
210 -- Instruction routines here --
220 ----------------------
```

It is important to note that CONSOL will not hold the values of the key(s) pressed after the keys are released. Therefore the program MUST be prepared to deal with unexpected results. This is accomplished in lines 10 and 50 above. And that's all there is to it!

Silicon Spelunking

by Brian Hall (WAUG!)

Like a great cave, the ST offers many dark and musty caverns to explore. From the many i/o ports, to it's graphics and sound, the ST presents us with features and concepts that many programmers may never have had access to before.

In this series we will explore various areas of the ST from a programmer's point of view. All examples will be in Megamax C (which I highly recommend), but it shouldn't be much work to convert for use with other compilers.

The object is to study various aspects of the machine-- the concepts presented should be applicable to any language. This month's topic: 'MIDI, not just for music anymore'.

MIDI is a standard that both defines a hardware specification and a software protocol. At the software level, MIDI defines what information can be exchanged and exactly how it is to be done. At the hardware level MIDI defines the connectors, cables, rate, and method of transmission. Leaving the discussion of the use of MIDI for MIDI instruments for a later topic, we are going to look at what can be done with the ports as a means of transmitting raw data.

The ST is equipped with 2 MIDI ports. One labeled 'MIDI IN' and one labeled 'MIDI OUT'. In addition, the 'MIDI IN' port also contains all the lines needed for what is usually a seperate port, 'MIDI THRU'. (You can make use of the "hidden" MIDI THRU feature via the purchase or construction of a 'Y' cable.) The nature of separate IN and OUT ports allows you to chain devices--the very feature that makes the MIDI ports more versatile for multi-device communication than any of the other ports on the ST!

Transmission of data is 8bit serial (much like RS-232) and occurs at roughly 32.5K baud. And this is where the fun begins. Rather than relegate the MIDI ports to the service of MIDI instruments, you can use the ports for high speed (relative to RS-232) data transfer. The applications are almost unlimited--to date I've seen a LAN (local area network) called MIDINET (which is public domain and includes Modula-2 source) and a multi-user game called MIDI-Maze (commercial, from Hybrid Arts). In fact any application in which you would like two or more devices to talk to each back and forth with a minimum of hassle is perfectly suited for use of the MIDI ports. Unlike RS-232, you have much less to worry about. The rate of transmission, parity, duplex, and more are already laid out for you. All you need do is get down to the meat of the task and transmit/receive what is necessary.

Since the MIDI ports are considered a device by BIOS, our programming task is greatly reduced. No devices to open or close, no initialization of parity, baud rate, and more--just simple I/O. To send a byte out, use Bconout(3,byte). To receive a byte, just save the result of Bconin(3). And to round things out, you can see if there is a byte waiting in the input buffer via Bconstat(3).

The example program (monitor.c) shows how all of this goes together in a simple program that monitors

the MIDI port. While you could use define's for the functions, I prefer to use code. Defines produce faster code, but I find functions easier to modify, add debug code to, etc. With a little modification, you could make the program echo data received at the IN port to the OUT port while printing it, and run the program on an ST in the middle of a MIDI-Maze chain of computers. Anyone for a little priviledged info?

If you would like to download the text of this article or the example program, or just want to discuss ST programming -- call the Neon Brain at (313)747-6260 and 'join atari'. You can reach the BBS via Merit (300/1200 baud).

Next Month: Programming Tips and Tricks for the RS-232 Port.

Suggested Reading:

ATARI ST Intro to MIDI Programming, Abacus book #10 (Good, but includes mistakes and poor programs)

Synthesizers and Computers, Vol III in the Keyboard Synthesizer Library, Keyboard Magazine (VERY Good. A little dated, but very informative. Includes the full text of the MIDI 1.0 Specification)

MIDI Pinout: (*=ONLY on ST - NOT part of the MIDI 1.0 Standard)

OUT	IN
1 - *THRU Transmit Data	1 - Not Connected
2 - Shield Ground	2 - Not Connected
3 - *THRU Loop Return	3 - Not Connected
4 - OUT Transmit Data	4 - IN Receive
5 - OUT Loop Return	5 - IN Loop Return

(As seen by the ST)

```
/* monitor.c - monitor the midi port
** By Brian Hall, Copyright(c) 1987
** Created 04/04/87   Updated 04/11/87 */

#include <osbind.h>
#include <stdio.h>

#define K_UNDO 0x00610000L
#define MIDI 3
#define CON 2

/* Return a byte from the MIDI port  */
get_midi()
{
  return Bconin(MIDI)&0xff;
}


/* Put a byte to MIDI */
put_midi(byte)
int byte;
{
  Bconout(MIDI,byte);
}

/* Return logic TRUE if there is a byte waiting for
input  */
midi_status()
{
  return Bconstat(MIDI);
}

/* Get data from the input buffer (and ignore) until
it clears  */
midi_drain()
{
  while (midi_status()) get_midi();
}

main()
{
  int byte;

  puts("MIDI Line Monitor--emucsc!bhall--11 Apr
87");
  midi_drain();
  puts("Ready. Press UNDO to exit.\n");
  while (1) { /* An infinite loop */
    if (Cconis() && Bconin(CON)==K_UNDO) break;
    if (midi_status()!=0) {
      byte=get_midi();
      printf("MIDI sent %02x ",byte);
      if (byte<0x80) puts("(Data)");
      else puts("(Status)");
    }
  }
}
```

Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

Next Meeting Dec. 9, Voc. Ed. Ctr., 475 E. Roosevelt

Chairman's Column

by Chuck Steele

Well, Christmas is just around the corner, and that means it's time for the ATARI CHRISTMAS party! We will be contacting you soon. There will be food, drink and computer fun. We should have a special Holiday Disk Of the Month. Hope to see you there.

We have Daisy Dot Printer program for those of you with XL or XE computers and an Epson, Gemini or Star printer. This program allows you to print in many different type styles, in a high resolution. In fact, the resolution is so good that it looks like type from a daisy wheel printer or a laser printer. The program allows you to have close, normal or wide spacing! The disk comes with a type editor so you can design your own type, or you can use the five type styles that come on the disk. Look in the August, 1987 issue of MAM, page 14, for a full review, and get your copy from the B.C.A.U.G. librarian. This is a must-have program for Star or Epson users!

The November meeting featured a Demo of the ATARI PLANETARIUM. This well-written program allows one to see the sky on any day or night of the year. The program places the planets in their correct position, along with the Sun and Moon. The programs accuracy allows you to simulate lunar or solar eclipses past present and future and any point on the Earth. A find command allows you to quickly locate any celestial object. The program even has Halley's Comet on it! For those of you interested in Astronomy, this is a must-have program.

Well, we are getting to the end of the year, and January is time to elect new officers. I want our membership to get involved in the politics of computing. The club can continue to support you, only as long as people show interest, come to meetings and get involved. I plan to step down as chairman in January, so we all need to consider who will be our new leader. I will support and help my successor get started. It was an honor to serve as your chairman, but I must step down to devote more time to other things. It is my hope that the club will continue to support Atari users in the Battle Creek area. To this extent I will aid and support the club, but from a more sideline position.

The positions available are, CHAIRMAN, LIBRARIAN, SECRETARY, TREASURER, NEWSLETTER/MEMBERSHIP.

Chairman	Chuck Steele	964-1701
Librarian	Dan Egan	962-2549
Treasurer	Josephine Yeager	968-8401
Newsletter/ Membership	Tom Siemietkowski	963-4475

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

Welcome to the "New" Michigan Atari Magazine. We are looking forward to working together with the new team. Hopefully the fine foundations laid are going to be built upon and the magazine will just keep getting better and better.

I hope you all read the burnout comments John Nagy made in his column last month. *Most* of the present officers and volunteers saw themselves in there. I hope you all see the need to get involved, pitch in, and help out. As usual, there is plenty of opportunity to do so. Right now we need an XL/XE Disk Librarian. This is a very important position. It requires a bit of work, and a lot of reliability. There are great rewards too so.. VOLUNTEER!!

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the state of Atari. More and more they are proving that we, the users, need each other. Ain't nobody else gonna take care of us!! Atari's attitude seems to be, "so the suckers bought a machine, now the heck with 'em". Hopefully, though, we will be spurred to support our local dealers and user groups. We are stronger together.

On a brighter note, my sons tell me a new software store, with some Atari titles, has opened in Meridian Mall. Check it out.

Both the 8-bit Sig and ST Sig meetings in December will be serving Cookies and Punch. Lots of Demos. In addition there will be a $1.00 special Christmas Disk and all of the Library Disks will be a special 1/2 price to those that attend the meeting. An Atari Gift will also be given to each member at this meeting.

I hope you all have a Happy Atari Holiday.

General C.H.A.O.S.

C.H.A.O.S. is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106. 300/1200 baud, 24 hours a day (ATASCII/ASCII).

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships, etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
P.O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics- Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.

Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and Appointed Officers of CHAOS

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
Publ Libr	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
Newsltr Coor	Rich Barnes	349-0513

(Cont. in next column)

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

Software Notes by Ed Kalush

Welcome to December....A good time to stay indoors and use the computer. That means we sell mores disks and that is good.

Hi! This is your new librarian for 8-bit software. Sorry we missed last month's issue. There were five Christmas music disks. Three from GAG member Dave Petite and two AMS music player disks. Now for some more good news. I do not have any idea what disks will be ready for December. I hope to have something appropriate for Xmas. I think I can talk our new president into giving our Xmas disk to all paid members free! Wait til the meeting to find out.

This job is starting out interesting. It wasn't the surprise call from Jerry Cross when he said Jim Tuma would have a box of 8-bit librarian stuff to give to me. Finding out a week later that he has been in Florida didn't even seem too bad. Jerry's trouble in locating the new Happy drive was a bit hard to take. (I did receive a call saying he found one!) But when I found out my nice, quick little Okidata printer is not compatable with Jim's Cute Labels was all I could bear. So I wrote my own simple-print, plain old keyboard characters routine to print last month's labels. Sorry they're not so fancy, but tomorrow's the meeting and I'm sure Jim can solve my problem. Oh well, soon I'll be as efficient as Jerry was!

This is starting to get long so until next month... One more thing, yours truly will be floating around the South Seas during next month's meeting (ahhh !!) on his tenth honeymoon. Will see you all in January.

Live long and program....

President's Report

By Jerry Cross

We have lots of stuff to cover this month, so lets get to it. Last month I received a lot of comments about the availability of Atari 1050 drives. So I did a little checking. It seems that Atari no longer makes these drives, and according to Sandi Austin, they are available only when you buy the 130XE package (computer, drive, and printer). This has been their policy for the last 4-5 months, but not once in my travels to Atari shows was this ever mentioned.

Sandi did say that the new Atari drives will be available by the time you read this, but will be shipped without the A-DOS operating system. OSS still has work to do on it, and Atari has not decided on how their upgrade policy will be. They plan to ship it with Atari DOS 2.5, which can not access the increased storage of the new drives. For now, if you are in need of a 1050 drive, you can still purchase them by mail from a few companies, or they are available from Rite Way in Detroit for $179.

Part of my new job as President is to nag folks about renewing their membership. Please check your mailing label and renew your memberships before they expire. Our strength is in it's members and we would hate to lose you!

For you new ST owners, we now have a large selection of Abacus books in our library. Contact one of the officers if you wish to check them out. Also, as of this date we still have not received any of the Antic or Analog magazines. They should be available by the next meeting. We have ordered six IMG Scan units for the club. These gizmos can be attached to your printer and will scan any picture (a page of a magazine, flyer, whatever...) and convert it into a NEO or Degas formatted file. The cost is $60 each (a 40% discount). See one of the officers if you are interested.

Due to the holidays, the Saturday workshop for November and December will be cancelled. Matt Howe is currently working with the school trying to set up an alternate date. If you did not sign Matt's workshop list, and wish to attend his 8bit programming session, you can call him at 234-1009 and get the new date.

The December general meeting will feature a repeat of the MIDI-MAZE fun-day. Due to a lack of advance notice, the October session of MIDI-MAZE was sort of small. However, we did manage to get 12 game players to fight through raindrops and attend. We had five ST's hooked together and had a great time! This meeting is open to everyone, and if you own an ST please bring it along. The more computers we hook up the greater the fun!!!

The January general meeting will feature a guest speaker. Mike Clayton of Electronical Software will come and show some of his current software projects, plus demonstrate his YEMACYB color picture dump software for the 8bit computers.

That's it for this month. Enjoy the holidays and I'll see you at the next meeting.

Meeting Dates

Dec 9 General meeting (MIDI MAZE Day!)
Jan 13 General meeting
Jan 23 Workshop (no Workshop in Nov. or Dec.)

Jerry Cross (Pres.)	736-4544
Dave Pettit (VP-ST)	232-0508
Nick Klak (Mag Lib)	634-3936
Matt Howe (8bit VP)	234-1009
Jim Tuma (8bit Lib)	517-725-7359
FACTS BBS	736-3920

Mailing Address: Genesee Atari Group PO Box E Flint, MI 48507

GKAUG Minutes

November's meeting was a good one. We had several new people that signed up as new members.

This is the last letter I will be writing to you as the president of GKAUG, it is time to pass on the title to someone new. It has been a fun year. I have had a chance to get to know a lot of you better and have developed some great friendships that I might not have had if I had not been president. I want to say thanks to everyone that helped make our little club more fun and thanks for all the joy you've given me.

Events discussed at the last meeting: We held elections for new officers, they are in order.

President	Frank Felhiemer
Vice President	Dan Youngs
Treasurer	Dave Bryant

Secretary	Fred Farleigh
Librarian	Steven Beuchler
Disk Person	Dave Oldenburg
ST Person	Jim Zinky

We had the new people from MAM come to our meeting and talk a little bit about what they're going to do with the magazine. I think everyone is looking forward to the new format.

The next meeting will be a swap meet. So bring in your old software and hardware that you don't use any more and see if someone might want to trade you something else for it. You might even be able to sell it. The meeting will be kind of a Christmas party, and we will have some good things to eat. So come on out if only to have a good time.

Special thanks to Jim Zinky for bring out his ST and printer with Publishing Partner. There were a lot of people that enjoyed it. The next meeting will be December 12 at 11:00.

Daniel Youngs

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00. The location is Dewing Hall on Kalamazoo College Campus. The dues are $20.00 per year.

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

President George Nosky
2440 Parkridge S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616)942-1527

Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville, MI 49333
(616)795-7373

Meeting News

The attendance at the last meeting was great; 45-50 members by my count from the back of the room.

MAM publishing will be taken over by Bill and Pattie Rayl. They will try to keep the price at $.80 for members and will also try to have the magazine in our hands before the meeting. They have a laser printer so the quality of print should be better. They also plan to make the print bigger (maybe I can put off getting glasses for a while longer). They are based in Ann Arbor. They have two bulletin boards: Molin's Den (313)420-0407 and Treasure CheST (313) 973-9137.

The demo of SpeedCalc was great. Next month, December, Chris Pelton will show his ST.

George presented the budget problem, and by an almost unanimous decision, we will collect $3.00 from each member to bring our treasury in line.

Steve Gilbert and Gerry Borysiak were appointed to a nominating committee. Call them if you wish to run for office.

We have collected about half the questionnaires, and George tells me we will try to have them compiled for the next meeting. We should also have a copy of the CHAOS library by the December meeting.

M.A.C.E. Journal

MACE Minutes, November Meeting

The November general membership meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was called to order at 7:30p.m. by President Don Neff announcing there would be only a few demos and an important discussion concerning the MACE Journal. Don also announced that MACE weST BBS would be going 2400 baud as soon as Sharie hooks up the modem she has in her possession.

Member Mike Lechkun, with considerable assistance from his 5-year-old son, Brad, showed the ins and outs of a cartridge-based educational game from Fischer-Price called "Linking Logic." The game is constructed to develop logical problem-solving in young children while maintaining a significant entertainment quality. Brad did not seem the slightest bit interested that the game was found in the bargain bin at Toys-R-Us for only $5, and was later heard to say, "This is a fun game!"

Corresponding Secretary Ted Newkumet showed the New York Times Crossword Puzzles package which comes with a variety of pre-constructed puzzles. The game appears in the usual grid format as commonly seen in newspapers, but has a text-only option that places the clues and space for answers on the same line. This allows the player to quickly insert answers for more obvious clues, then go back to the grid to tackle harder words. Ted noted there is no provision for creating new puzzles or dumping puzzles to a printer for "off-line" puzzle-solving.

Don announced that MACE was approached by the new publishers of the Michigan Atari Magazine to join as a member club in this publication. MAM is the official newsletter of several other Atari user groups in Michigan, including CHAOS of Lansing, GAG of Flint, BCAUG of Battle Creek, GKAUG of Kalamazoo, GRASS of Grand Rapids, WAUG! of Ann Arbor, and TAG of Saginaw/Bay City/Midland. Membership Chairman Bill Rayl and Journal Editor Pattie Snyder-Rayl led a discussion lasting more than 1/2-hour about the proposal and entertained questions from the members. Members were asked to vote on the motion to affiliate with MAM on a six-month trial basis, approval was virtually unanimous. MACE members will receive issues of MAM in the usual manner starting with the December issue.

After a brief intermission, member Bob Retelle demonstrated Pokey Player and the AMS music system for the 8bit New User Forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm. Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 15, when we will hold our annual Christmas Party.

Michael Olin,
Recording Secretary

MACE Library Disk Exchange

By D. F. Neff

MACE will trade public domain disks, on a disk-for-disk basis, with any other Atari user group. We have an extensive 8bit library and a growing 16bit library.

Please notice that this offer is for a one-for-one swap of individual disks; we will not exchange entire libraries.

This offer is open to any Atari user group in any state or country in the world. If you are a member of an Atari club which may be interested in such an exchange, have your librarian send a descriptive listing of your public domain library contents to MACE. Address it to:

MACE Disk Exchange
P.O. Box 2785
Southfield, Michigan U.S.A. 48037

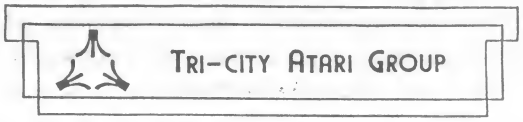
We will promptly send to you a list of our disks in return.

(Special note to clubs who responded to my earlier offer: if you haven't had a reply or received your disks from me, write again ASAP! I answered every letter which I received, but two groups have said they never received my reply. If you didn't hear from me, write again.)

1988 MACE Meeting Dates

Officer Meeting	General Meeting
Jan. 8	Jan. 18
Feb. 5	Feb. 16
March 4	March 15
April 8	April 19
May 6	May 17
June 10	June 21
July 8	July 19
Aug. 5	Aug. 16
Sept. 9	Sept. 20
Oct. 7	Oct. 18
Nov. 4	Nov. 15
Dec. 9	Dec. 20

All General meetings are held in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10-1/2 Mile Road and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30.



Letter from the Prez

Well, here it is, December already and time for our annual swap meet. As the year comes to a close, so does the current Michigan Atari Magazine. Pattie Rayl and her husband, Bill, (WAUG and MACE Atari Users Group members) are now formally taking over production of the publication. The magazine will now be done with an 8.5" x 11" format and will be produced on Publishing Partner. (This will be great for my review of Font Partner!! You'll be able to see some of the neat fonts I've been playing with!)

Remember to bring all of your old goodies to the swap meet.... Oh yeah, bring lots of cash too.... You might see something that you want to buy.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of December will feature a swap meet! There should be lots of 8-bit & ST hardware and software available for ridiculously low prices. (Hint: I've got a LOT of ST software I'll be dumping.) This is also our Christmas bash, so bring a goodie plate to pass. Things like cookies, brownies, or candy would be perfect. I'll bring a coffee pot. (Oh all

right, I'll bring coffee too!) Although there won't be any demos this month, we will have both an 8-bit and ST set up to test any software you might want to buy at the swap meet.

Looking forward to the month of January, LeRoy will be giving a tutorial on using DB Master One for the ST. Several applications will be demoed (and built) as you watch. Al Jennings will be demoing some public domain software for the 8-bits (he just wouldn't tell me what!), but since Al always does a great job I'm sure it will be well worth your time to attend.

Relics to Relish

The November meeting had an excellent turnout, considering that it was the day before the opening of deer season. For some reason the library decided to move us from our regular room into the kiddies' jungle room. Quarters were ery cramped and equipment had to be hauled quite a distance. It seems that another group (who by the way signed up AFTER us) got our room. Don't they have to find an open day like everybody else? Anyway, Marty Schmidt is calling up the person who arranged this fiasco to find out why this happened.

We started the meeting with the announcement our club now had some additional goodies available for members. We now have a VHS video tape titled "Using Your 520ST" that is aimed at the beginner. It shows you how to set up your system and how to perform basic GEM functions. If you'd like to check it out of our library, just show up at a meeting! We also now have labels for 3.5" disks. These labels are 2.75" x 1.875", pin feed, and cost $1.00 per 100 labels. They work great with DISCAT and LABELJR, two disk labelers in our PD ST library.

A change in meeting format was discussed and we now have an 1/2-hour question and answer period. Although we've always had an informal Q&A period at the end of the meeting, if was felt that more beginners would benefit from a formal Q&A time period. The general agenda will now be:

Opening of meeting
Club business
Question & Answer period
Demonstrations
PD Library access

Please, if you have any questions, bring them to the next meeting! The Q&A period will be available for any question,no matter how simple or complicated.

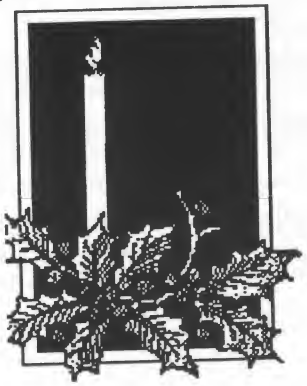
After resolving these issues, we moved on to the demos portion of the meeting. Tom Wheeler demoed Certificate Maker by Springboard Software. This program allows you to make nearly any type of certificate conceivable, from a Couch Potato Award to a Thanks For Nothing Award. Included are 220 certificates, each with a unique title and graphic picture. You can add your own text to the certificate with a variety of fonts and then dress it up with any of 24 borders.

One very nice feature is the ability to create a name list. If you wanted to make awards for a classroom you would just create a list of the children's names, then prepare the certificate you want and click on name list. Certificate Maker would then make an award for each of names on the list!

The printouts were pretty good -- better than PrintMaster, but not as good as Publishing Partner. I didn't count the number of printers supported, but there were a LOT. Even Tom's C. Itoh Prowriter Jr. was supported! The package looks excellent and is available for $39.95. There is also an extra disk of certificates available from Springboard.

Char Davis demoed Award Ware from Hi Tech Expressions for the 8Bits. This program also makes certificates (about 60 different types), but it can also make 7 types of coupons and tickets. You choose your own border and graphic for each award, coupon, or ticket, and you can choose from 5 fonts when entering text. This program is excellent and is the 8-bit counterpart of Certificate Maker.

LeRoy Valley then demoed the Hot November Byte PD disk of the month. Included on this disk was Schizo v1.3, a replacement for the control panel that uses the same amount of space and provides you with many more functions, DCformat, a formatter that allows you to format a disk in standard, twister, Magic Sac, or IBM format, some Print Master graphics files, and assorted other goodies. All seven copies disappeared very quickly.



At the end of the meeting a raffle was held for Certificate Maker and Award Ware. Ticket sales were brisk and the club made out better than we ever have. We almost broke even! Anyway, Steve Volker won Certificate Maker, and Char Davis won Award Ware. Congratulations Steve and Char!!

Expiration Notice

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive *no* more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings	Monitor & Disk Drive
Club Equipment	800XL

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Dennis Wright	Monitor & 520ST
LeRoy Valley	Disk Drive

Once again, a big *THANKS* to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. *Please,* if you're going to be late, or can't make it, *call!!* It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

Next Meeting

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

December 12, 1987 January 9, 1987

OFFICERS of TAG are:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Joe Manelis	ST Disk Lib.	790-0993
George Stuart	Newsletter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks *at no charge* if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

From The Prez...

It seems like every year about this time I find myself saying "Well, it's that time of year again... Where did the time go???" The Christmas season does have a way of making many people reflect upon what they've done and where they've been during the past year, doesn't it?

WAUG! has seen a fair amount of change in the last 12 months, from developing a club Charter, to electing officers, to buying hardware, to attending the Atari Magic Show in August. I can think of no one who could have predicted all this in December '86 without being laughed at or considered moderately insane! For the most part I feel the club has taken positive *forward* strides, and I am anticipating 1988 will be another great year for our club.

As a way of celebrating the growth and strengthening of WAUG!, the officers decided the December meeting be dedicated to having fun (!) with Atari computers, and are keeping business matters to an absolute minimum. MIDI Maze Fun Night will find members sitting in a fairie ring of Atari ST computers, grinning from ear to ear, shouting curses and generally enjoying the opportunity to annihilate just one more of those silly little faces! In fact, I expect we will need to call out the armed forces to get Bruce Urbanski and Mike Pieronek to leave the room at the end of the night!

We currently have 6-7 people bringing their ST systems, and we have the capability of connecting up to 17 machines, monochrome OR color. We are anxiously looking for more volunteers to bring their computers and joysticks for this extravaganza. We will also need power cords/strips. Please contact Bruce or any of the other officers...

Many of you are aware that we will also have an 8bit system running the Flight Simulator II game. Both MIDI Maze and Flight Simulator II will be raffled at the end of the night. Make sure you see Bob Carlini to purchase your $1 tickets!
I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. May the joy that you experience in the coming weeks remain with you throughout the year!

Michael Olin
WAUG! President

WAUG! Minutes

Things looked bad at the start of the meeting... the monitor cables we had would not connect up to the nice, big, color monitor in the room. However, Mike Pieronek came through and located the right adaptor, and was justly rewarded with a round of applause.

The topic this meeting was graphics and printer utilities. For the ST, Bill Rayl demoed a commercial program called Certificate Maker, by Springboard, and loaned to WAUG by United Computer in Canton. This program is very easy to use, and includes 220 pre-fabricated certificate templates, covering all occasions. A few are wide-open for you to fill in just about everything, but many of them are for specific needs, ranging from "Big Mouth Award" to more complimentary things. After choosing which type of dot matrix printer to use, you pick which certificate to create from the pictures in the manual. Besides filling in the name of the recipient, and other things depending on the certificate, you also get to choose from various fonts and borders. If you have a whole group to present the same certificate to, you can even merge a list of recipients into the printout.

Next, Mike Pieronek got up to demo a number of 8bit graphics and printer utilities from the library, which were part of the disk bundles he put together for this month, including:

1. Cute Labels (from the Genesee Atari Group). This creates fancy disk labels including up to two Printshop icons and double-height, double-width text.

2. Printshop Icon Editor. Since we had no joystick at the meeting, Mike was forced to discover the ST mouse works in this program. After loading in a Printshop icon, you can edit it using fonts of your choice, moving/copying pieces of the icon around, and using some pre-made patterns.

3. Daisy Dot (Near Letter Quality for non-NLQ printers). If your dot matrix printer doesn't support NLQ, or if you want to get more variety in the NLQ fonts you use, this program is a must.

4. Billboard. This takes a standard 62-sector (Micropainter) picture and prints it out as large as your imagination allows, up to something like 95 feet x 85 feet. Of course, the bigger you go, the longer it takes, and it does require cutting and pasting together the 8-1/2 inch-wide sheets from your printer.

5. BBKART. This is a drawing program that works with many standard picture file formats. It includes such niceties as designing your own fill patterns and a good zoom feature.

After these demos, we resolved some club business. First, the membership voted to purchase a used Indus drive for the 8bit library and a used SF 354 drive for the ST library, so present and future librarians wouldn't need to wear out their own drives with all the copying needed in those positions.

Treasurer Bob Carlini announced that the end of this meeting was the last chance to renew memberships at the old $5 rate before the new $10 rate went into effect. He also mentioned that member name tags would be present at every meeting and are to be returned to him (or a designated helper) at the end of the meeting. Finally, he promoted the sale of raffle tickets for drawings to be done at the December meeting. The prizes will be MIDI Maze for the ST and Flight Simulator for the 8bit users.

Bill Rayl, our Newsletter editor, described the upcoming changes in the Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM), which he will be producing as a business venture with the help of Pattie Rayl and Mike Olin. After he answered questions, the club voted to have MAM become, once again, the official WAUG! Newsletter. In other words, by being a member of WAUG!, you will now get MAM delivered to your door instead of a WAUG!-only newsletter.

As a final note, we were pleased to have a couple members of the Windsor Atari Users' Group (an alternate version of WAUG) come to the meeting and show off a great animation demo created by one of their members.

Next month: Raffle and MIDI Maze party! Also, due to popular demand, Mike Pieronek will have more printer disk bundles available, as well as bundles of Antic July-December, 1987 disks. For only $10, you can't beat these deals! Remember, these bundles are available for a limited time

How to Join WAUG!

In Person: Come to a meeting! WAUG! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm. Meetings are held in Room 2228 of the University of

Michigan School of Education, located on the corner of South and East University in Ann Arbor (write for detailed map).

By Mail: Send a check for $10, payable to Bob Carlini (our Treasurer), to the WAUG! mailing address. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.

List of Future WAUG! Activities

Dec. 8:	MIDI Maze Fun Night
Jan. 12:	Telecommunications
Feb. 9:	Games Night
Mar. 8:	Business Applications
Apr. 12:	Music
May 10:	"Hack and Slash"
Jun. 14:	Elections/Flea Market

No meetings held in July and August

How to Contact WAUG!

Clear Thinking	(313)761-2444	(300/1200 baud)
Molin's Den	(313)420-0407	(300/1200 baud)
Treasure CheST	(313)973-9137	(300/1200/2400 baud)
The OutpoST	(313)449-8544	(300/1200/2400 baud)

BY MAIL: WAUG!
3487 Braeburn Circle
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

How many of the 42 computer words can you find? There should be 16 letters left over, they will make a secret message.

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U O E S A C C W O D N I W R C M E
R N M E N U A U T O E X E C B A T
S L W M V E M P S K P A T T E S E
O I O A A I I C S A K R H V X T L
R N D C E N R I M K O E A P E E E
P E I R F E D D O S C S Y M C R D
H L W O E Y F I L E D A T A U D R
A A N N P C E P U T O O B T T I A
N T Y P O C K S I D C U T O E S F
Y R O T C E R I D N E T W O R K T
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BOOT UP
BREAK
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CASE
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CURSOR
CUT
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DATA
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DIRECTORY
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DOS
DRAFT
DRIVE
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EXECUTE
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FONT
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KEY
LOOP
MACE
MACRO
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MENU
NETWORK
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RAM
RECALL
SAVE
SCREEN
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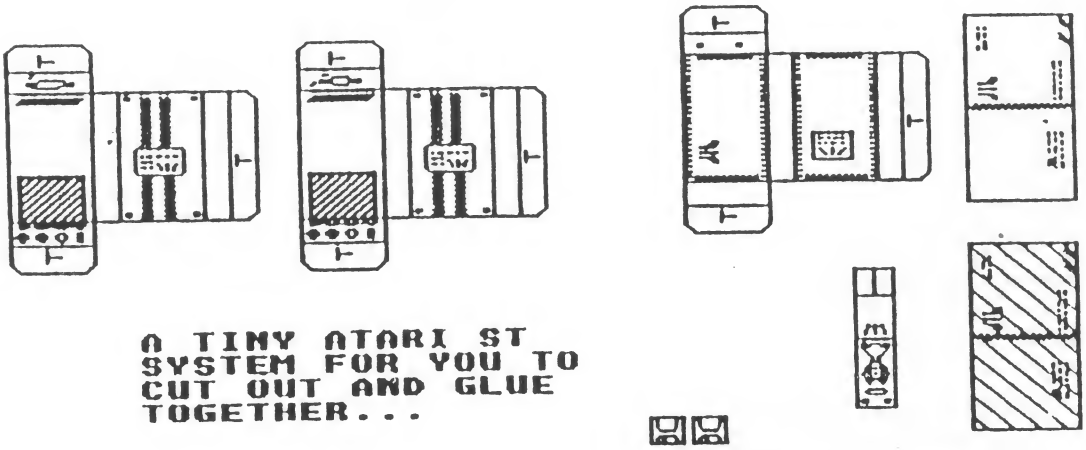
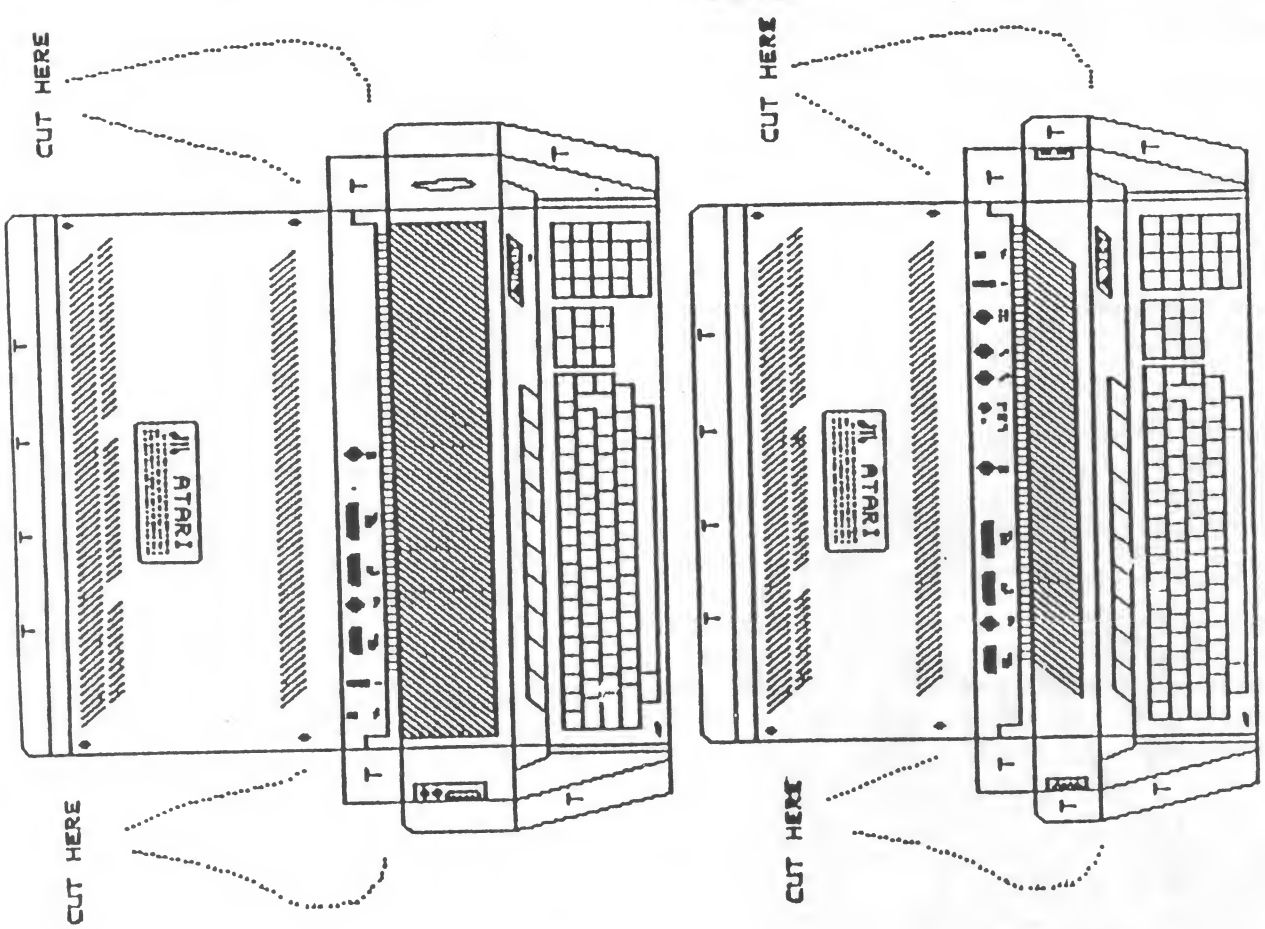
WIDOW
WINDOW

Answer will be in next months journal. HPN

The Mini ST



A TINY ATARI ST SYSTEM FOR YOU TO CUT OUT AND GLUE TOGETHER...



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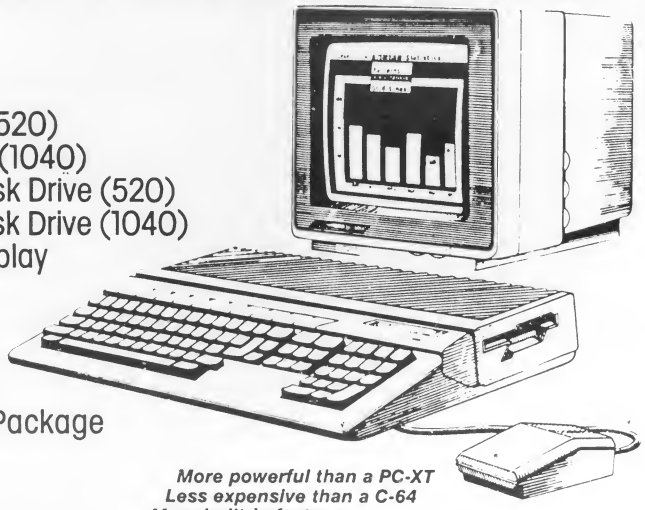

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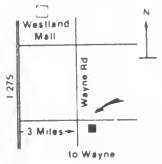

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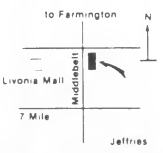

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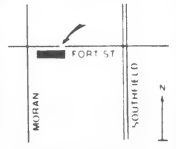

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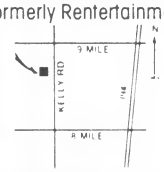

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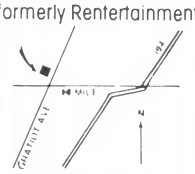

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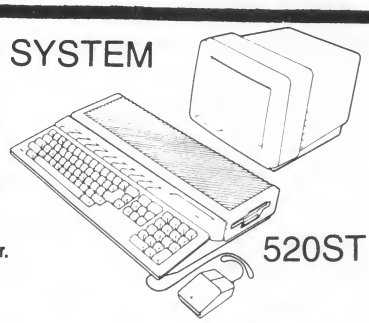

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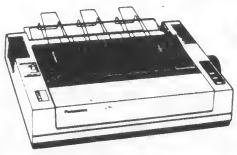

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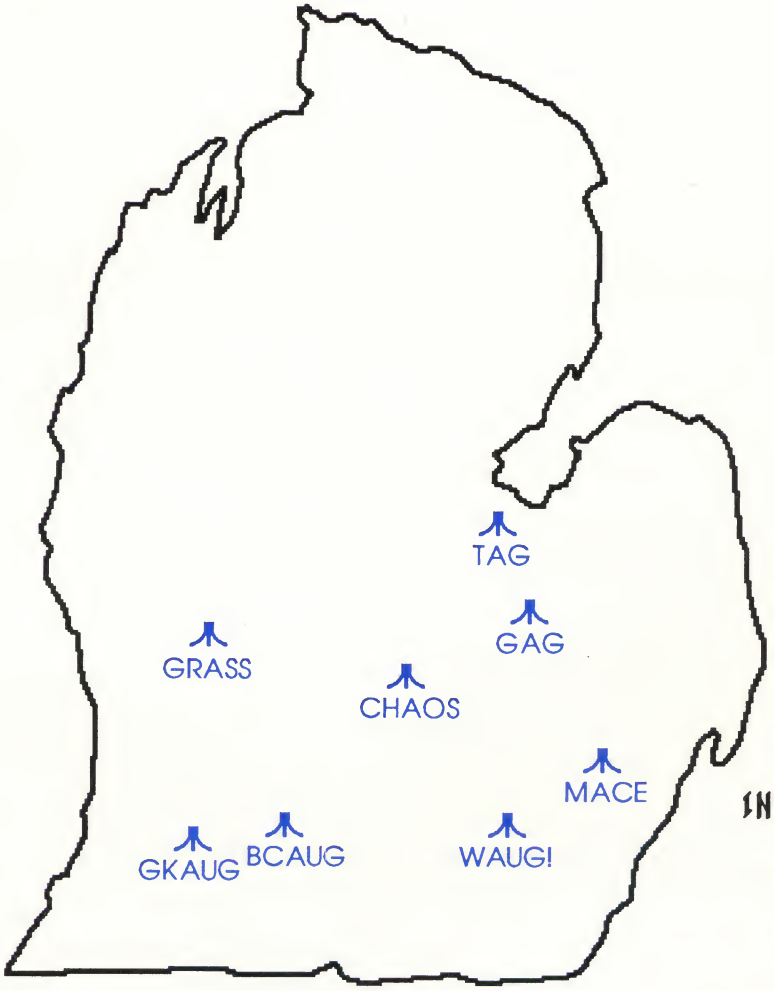

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Atari News and Comment
How to Use the Merit Network
On the Fritz
Review of Font Design Partner
XEP-80 Review

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MAM this Month

Vol. 3, No. 1
January 1988

Features

From the Editors' Desks	1
Atari News and Comment	2
How to Use the Merit Network	2
Bits of Basic (8bit)	5
Multi-Drive Formatter (ST)	6
Silicon Spelunking (ST)	10
On the Fritz	13
Add-on Modem Speaker (8bit)	14
Making Old Software Work with New Roms (ST)	15
Alternate Character Sets (8bit)	17
Software Piracy	17
Flying the ST	19
Is ANALOG Magazine Doomed?	20
Living with the XEP-80 (8bit)	21
ST Notes -- Font Design Partner	22
Last Hacks: ST Emulator for 8bit?	25
Classified	32

Club News and Minutes

BCAUG	(Battle Creek, MI)	26
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	27
GAG	(Flint, MI)	29
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	29
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	29
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	30
TAG	(Saginaw/ Tri-Cities)	31
WAUG!	(Ann Arbor, MI)	32

Advertisers

Mars Merchandising	5
VIS Video Wedding Specialists	7
State Street Computer	9
Soft House	16
Livonia Secretarial Service	18
Computer Trade Shows	20
Rentertainment/ Basic Bits n Bytes	23
Castle Communications	Inside Front Cover
Innovative Concepts	Inside Back Cover
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From the Editors' Desks

We hope everyone had a pleasant and safe holiday season. We heard lots of comments about the last issue of MAM – most of them ranging from "looks real good" to "Wow!!" If anyone has any criticism or complaints about the magazine, please don't hesitate to let us know. Either leave a message on the Treasure CheST BBS (313)973-9137 or send your "Letter to the Editors" to us with your club's monthly submissions. Also, let us know if there is something in particular you'd like to see in the magazine – an interview with a particular person, a continuing column or whatever.

Our apologies for the lateness of the December issue. We were a few days behind our hoped-for schedule because of some problems we ran into on the printing end. Part of this was because it was our first time through (now we know what we're in for) and the Thanksgiving holiday caused problems for the Printers (now they know what they're in for!). This month, we had the Christmas holiday, but we were better prepared for it!

In this issue, we have some very good articles, including another superb hardware-related submission from Don Neff, president of MACE. This month's submission deals with adding a speaker to your "deaf" modem. He tells us that he plans to continue submitting these gems and he's already working on next month's article! The "On the Fritz" column also has hardware tips for both the ST and 8bit Atari owners. Bob Fritz, an authorized Atari serviceperson, is eagerly awaiting next month's questions, so let's keep them coming!

On the programming end, we have a little something for everybody (hopefully!). From Bob Retelle, we have an ST GFA Basic program that will format 2 disk drives simultaneously. For all you 8bit programmers who wish to copy protect your BASIC programs, Mike Olin (WAUG! President) has supplied some "basic" protection schemes.

There's lots more, but we'll quit telling you about it and let you get to it...

Last month we managed to only get to one user group's general meeting, and we'd like to thank TAG for their warmth and hospitality. This is fair warning to BCAUG and CHAOS (the only two we haven't visited) – don't be surprised if we show up at your next meeting!!

ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT

Editorial By Bill Rayl

Products, Products, Products

Since the arrival of the MEGAs in the stores, other Atari equipment which we've been waiting months to see is now appearing as well. The XEP-80 80 column adapter is out (see the XEP-80 review elsewhere in this issue). There have also been reports of the XF551 appearing in stores on the West Coast (without A-DOS which will supposedly be put into the public domain when it is ready).

The Laser is reportedly also "out the door," but there are some catches. First, it is not Postscript compatable, due to the high cost of licensing which Atari doesn't wish to pay. Another little problem is the interface box, which has two DMA ports, allowing for use of a Hard Drive with the Laser. It seems that the interface draws power from the Laser, so you need to have the Laser turned on at all times that you wish to use the hard drive. Hmm...

Supplies of 520 and 1040 STs have begun to dwindle in some areas, possibly due to Atari's push to get the MEGAs and other hardware out by Christmas. Or, maybe they've cut back the supply of STs in hope of pushing the MEGA sales? Naw. Regardless, if you plan to purchase an ST as a Christmas gift (!), I hope you'll be able to find one. Some dealers were smart and bought early for Christmas, so you may not have any problems at all.

In the June WAUG! Newsletter, I reported that Supra Corp. was working on a hard drive with a 10 MEG removeable disk. Well, Supra has finally announced just such a drive! If you have need for the capacity of a hard drive, but want the flexibility of a floppy then this may be just for you. The drive has an average seek time of 80ms and connects to the STs DMA port. No price has been announced at the time this information came to me. Wonder if they could be talked into making it connect to the 8bit, as well? Looks like I'll have to give Supra a call!

On the Software Side

There has been a lot of interest in Word Perfect for the ST, or at least a lot of talk. With a price tag of $295, not everyone will be rushing out to get it, but the $99 student and educator price is a steal for this software. What would you 8bit owners say if you could get Word Perfect on the 8bit Ataris? It may be easier than you think.

According to the program's author, Jeff Wilson, if Word Perfect Corp. received 10,000 signatures requesting the software, they "could be convinced to being development on an 8bit version." Wilson says he estimates that he could get the package done in about six months once he got the go-ahead on it.

If you would like to see Word Perfect on the 8bit Atari (along with the possible ramifications to other software manufacturers!!!), send a letter to Word Perfect Corp., c/o Marketing Dept., 288 West Center Street, Orem, Utah 84057. Better yet, why not have your club start a petition!

On to darker corners... Gordon Monnier of Michtron raised some eyebrows with his offer of $200 cash or $400 worth of software as a reward for confirmed pirate BBSes with Michtron software. It seems the response to his offer was a bit more than he expected, with nearly 80 confirmed BBSes with pirated Michtron programs on-line. Monnier withdrew his offer soon afterwards and is now in the process of taking legal action against the more notable pirate boards.

According to the December '87 issue of Compute's ST, Michtron's attorneys have even filed suit against the parents of one New York minor who was running a pirate board. The suit claims that the parents contributed to the infringement of copyright laws by their lack of supervision and by supplying the hardware and phone line used by the minor. WOW! That should make some people think twice about putting non-public domain software out for download.

How to Use the Merit Network (Part I)

by John Perry, Jr.

Atari-specific info added by Bill Rayl

Thanks to Nick Holland, Jack Daugherty and the users of his Tandy Harbor BBS, and my brother, Matthew Perry. Also to Microsoft Word 3.0, Wordstar 3.3, Sidekick, and the Selfware, Inc. "STRIP" program.

Introduction

I stumbled into the Merit Network almost by accident. Someone told me how it could be used to call bulletin board systems in the Ann Arbor area, without getting stuck with big telephone bills. (Thanks, Nick!) From there I was pretty much left on my own, to use the system as best I could.

There was no documentation. There was a support telephone line, but the daytime phone rates from

Houghton to Ann Arbor are roughly on the same scale as calls to Europe, and I'm a college student with too little income. Until recently I couldn't afford to call Ann Arbor from the Upper Peninsula just to ask questions. I picked up information about Merit slowly, through folklore, and passed on as much as I could to other people.

I call a *lot* of BBSes, though. I have an index card with about 20 phone numbers in the Ann Arbor area that I use regularly. And I've been asked questions about Merit on most of these BBSes (and answered them, and been asked more questions ...)

Here's five months of condensed wisdom. If you want to add to or correct it, that's fine with me. *Please* leave me a message on a BBS somewhere, telling me what you've changed/added! There's a lot about this system that I don't know yet. Also, any information about using Merit ought to be passed on to everyone that's interested.

I will distribute all revisions of this file to all of the BBSes I use, and hopefully everyone can keep more or less up to date on this information.

The purpose of this file is to provide people with the information necessary to allow them to connect with Ann Arbor area BBS services for free. It is possible not only to leave ASCII messages and use ASCII files, but to upload and download programs using such transfer protocols as XMODEM, YMODEM, KERMIT, SEALINK, and MODEM7.

The Merit Computer Network

The Merit Computer Network is a network of educational computers in Michigan. It is primarily designed to allow people in one part of the state to call university mainframe computers in other parts of the state, and use the computers as if they were logged on through a terminal connected to the machine.

For example, a student of Michigan State could visit relatives in Cheboygan for the weekend. If he called his university mainframe through Merit, he could complete his programming homework on the university mainframe while he was in Cheboygan.
For another example, a researcher at Michigan Tech could be performing intricate physics research and need the services of a bigger, faster computer than the IBM 4381's and VAX computers available at Michigan Tech. He could call U-M and connect to their powerful HNC (Hypothetical New Computer, which I just made up), and complete the necessary part of his research on that system.

Merit is what is called a "packet switching network". This means that all of the data being sent to Merit by all of the various users is saved up until Merit has a "full packet". (If Merit doesn't get a full packet after a certain period of time – a second or two, probably, it just sends what it has as a "short packet".)

The process of saving up information for a packet is part of why Merit seems to send data to you in short bursts. (It really is sending you information in short bursts.) If this sounds confusing, don't worry. You don't have to understand it to use Merit to connect to Ann Arbor BBS systems.

What this basically means is that sometimes it will seem as if a BBS is not echoing data back to your terminal very quickly. Don't worry. You don't have to wait for a character to echo before you can type the next character. (If you do that, sometimes you will spend more time waiting than typing!) If you are really bothered by this "feature," set %reader=off (see instructions in Part II of this article next month).

Connecting with Ann Arbor

It is possible to connect with Ann Arbor bulletin boards without paying long distance telephone fees, if you are within local calling range of a Merit node. There is a complete list of all nodes at the end of this article. They are available to people in most parts of Michigan as local telephone calls.

To connect with Merit, you must have your terminal (the program that runs your modem -- Flash!, ST-Term, Express, Amodem or whatever) set to the proper parameters.

Data Bits	7 (or 8 – see section on modem break)
Parity	EVEN (or NONE – see section on modem break)
Stop Bits	1
Duplex	FULL
Baud rate	300 or 1200 depending on your modem and the baud rate of the node which you will be calling.

If you intend to call Ann Arbor area bulletin boards, you will only be able to connect at 300 or 1200 baud through the Merit system. Merit is currently planning on adding 2400 baud access in the very near future, as well as adding Hayes commands accessible by callers. More on this in a future update.

You need to find a node that is near enough to you to be a local telephone call. Make sure your terminal parameters are set to the correct settings, then call the Merit number as if it were an ordinary BBS. For a list of nodes and the cities they are in, see the section titled "Michigan Merit Numbers (in Part II)."

When you have received a carrier from the Merit node, you will have to hit <return> a couple of times. This will tell the Merit node what baud rate you are using to call. You will see a couple of lines of information printed, saying "Welcome to the Merit Computer Network", or some such, and identifying what baud rate you are using to call Merit. Then you will get a line that looks like:

%Terminal=

You can just hit <return> again, and your terminal type will be entered as "none". Terminal type is not important for the use of Merit as described in this manual. You can enter your terminal type if you wish (VT52, VT100, or whatever you use).

You will then get several more lines of information (some of it quite cryptic – don't worry about it. I never have!). [ED: A future update on Merit will include an explanation of these "cryptic" lines and how you can use some of this info to get more out of Merit.] Then you will see a line that looks like:

Which Host?

If you are calling at 300 baud, enter

DO300

or

DIAL300-AA

If you are calling at 1200 baud, enter

DO1200

or

DIAL1200-AA

There is no "do2400," just 300 baud and 1200 baud are supported at this time.

You have connected to a special "dial out" modem located on the campus of the University of Michigan, and connected to the Merit Network. You might get either of two results:

1. You might get a strange looking line of code, and the message "All DO300 ports are busy" (or "All DO1200 ports are busy"). There are lots of people trying to use this system. You just had the bad luck to call when someone else was using the dial out modems. You'll have to call back later.
2. You might get a strange line of code, followed by this:

   Hello, I'm ready.

   *

The asterisk (*) is the prompt that the dial-out modem uses to tell you that it's waiting for a command. When you get this response, you are ready to begin calling Ann Arbor area bulletin boards.

If you do not get either of these two responses, hit a control-E followed by a RETURN. That should force you into command mode.

There are only a few commands that you can give the dial out modem. They are as follows:

D – dial a specified number
R – redial a number previously dialed (up to 9 times)
I – idle, quit using the dial out modem
H – Help, a list of these commands

Since you've just connected to the dial out modem, you probably want to call a BBS. You need to pick out a board that seems interesting to you (there's a list of Ann Arbor area BBSes in Part II of this article, to appear in next month's issue). Type the following:

D<return>

The modem will ask you, "What Number?" Type:

9XXXXXXX

where the Xs represent the number you wish to call. For example, to call The Treasure CheST BBS, you could type:

D
99739137

The modem would automatically dial the number for you. If the Treasure CheST phone line was available, you would receive the following messages from the dial out modem:

Ringing ...
Answer Tone ...
Online ...

and you could proceed to log on to The Treasure CheST BBS. Ta Da! If the phone was busy, you would get the following message:

Dialing ...
Busy.
*

indicating the line was busy, and Merit's modem is ready for you to try another call. You might also get the following message:

Dialing ...
Ringing ...
Voice!

This might mean that you've called a number that isn't a BBS at all. (Maybe it was a BBS and the phone has been disconnected. Or maybe you dialed the phone number wrong.) It might also mean that Merit cannot connect to the BBS on the phone line. There are several problems that might cause this result. The BBS might not work at whatever baud rate you are trying to use to call it. (The BBS might be 2400 baud only, for example.)

You could dial another number by typing "D <return>", then "9"-(the BBS phone number) "<return>". Or you could redial the Treasure CheST number as many times as you wished until you got through. The dial out modem has a redial function.

To use the redial feature, you do the following:

R<return>

The dial out modem will respond with

How many times?

If you only want to redial once, you can just hit a <return>. If you want to redial more than once, you can respond with any number between 2 and 9.

When you're done using a particular BBS, just log off normally. The dial out modem will disconnect you from the DO300/DO1200 line automatically. You will return to the "Which Host?" prompt, and you can re-enter the dial out modem from there by typing "DO300" or "DO1200."

[ED: Due to the length of this article, Part II will be run in the February issue of MAM. Part II contains information concerning uploading and downloading via Merit, how to send a modem break, a list of Merit access nodes around the state and a list of Ann Arbor BBSes that you can access via Merit. Don't miss it!]

Bits of BASIC

by M. Olin (WAUGI, MACE)

'Protecting' Your Software

You say you've written a program, and you spent a lot of hours making it "just right?" You've written some pretty nice routines that you're quite proud of but you don't want just anybody to have access to it? Here's a couple of hints that might help you keep some prying eyes from viewing your work.

Disable the BREAK Key

The very first line of your program should look like this:

```
10 POKE 16,64:POKE 53774,64
```

Effectively we have told the computer to ignore the fact that the user is pressing the BREAK key. Therefore, the user cannot "break out" of the program and look at your code. But that's only the beginning. Any Atarian who has had his/her computer for more than 2 weeks should know that all you'd have to do is press RESET and we'd be back to Square 1.

Cold Starting

Add the following command to line 10, making sure to separate it from the previous commands with a colon (:).

```
POKE 580,1
```

Now, whenever the user presses the RESET key, the computer will act almost as if you had turned the

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power off and back on again. In other words, it will "reboot" and the program that was running will be erased from memory.

So far so good! Now you need a routine that permits the approved users to have access to your program, but those persons you want to keep out will have to be "filtered" somehow. A "password" seems in order here.

```
19 DIM PASS$(20)
20 INPUT PASS$:IF PASS$<>"Your Password"
THEN NEW:END
```

All persons who are using your program must know the password, which can be up to 20 characters long. Notice that it is upper/lower "case sensitive." If they enter it wrong, the program is erased from memory. Zip. Kaput. Gone. And just to make sure that "the enemy" can't discover your password by staring over your shoulder, we're going to make sure that the characters you type never appear on the screen.

```
15 X=PEEK(559):POKE 559,0
```

This command will turn off the chip, called ANTIC, that drives your monitor. The screen will turn black with no visible text, and will remain in this state until you turn it back on again, which you will not do unless the proper password is entered in line 20. If the correct password is given, then this line will complete the job:

```
25 PRINT "<ESC><SHFT-CLEAR>":POKE 559,X
30 REM  Your program starts here.
```

Let's check our progress: The program won't run if they don't know the password. They can't RESET, and they can't press BREAK and LIST the program to look at your password. What's left?

We have to find a way to prevent the uninvited user from LOADing the program and LISTing the lines that contain your password, since none of the above commands will take effect until after the program starts running. This part gets a little tricky, so you will want to type it in *exactly* as it is written here. After your program is completed and "debugged" to your satisfaction, you need to add these lines. Note that your program *must not ever* GOTO or GOSUB to these lines.

```
32761 BOTTOM=PEEK(131)*256+PEEK(130):TOP=
PEEK(133)*256+PEEK(132)
32762 FOR X=BOTTOM TO TOP:POKE X,155:
NEXT X
32763 FINISH=PEEK(139)*256+PEEK(138):POKE
FINISH+2,0:SAVE "D:filename.ext":NEW
```

A word of caution: Make sure you SAVE a copy of your program before you continue with the following instructions. Store this copy in a safe place as it is the only copy that can *ever* be LISTed again. Not even the approved password user can LIST your program once these routines have been performed, so take good care of this "source" disk!

Ready? Make sure the disk on which you want the "protected" version of your program is in Drive 1, then type:

```
GOTO 32761
```

and press <RETURN>. Here's what happens: the FOR/NEXT loop in line 32762 will cause all the variable names which are used in your program (and stored in the Variable Name Table) to be replaced with CHR$(155), the ATASCII carriage return. (Any other character can be used by placing its appropriate ATASCII value in the POKE statement in line 32762.) When this happens, the program can no longer be LISTed, nor can it be LOADed! In fact, the only way to LOAD and RUN this program ever again is by issuing the RUN "D:filename.ext" command from BASIC.

And there you have it! A reasonably good, but not absolutely perfect way to "protect" your software.

Multi-Disk, Multi-Drive Format Program

by Bob Retelle (MACE, WAUG!)

Whenever I buy a box of new disks, I usually format them all at once, so I don't get caught in the middle of something without a disk to save onto. Unfortunately, formatting disks has to be one of the most boring tasks known to man. Even the attempts to liven things up by putting 'R-Rated' pictures in the background of formatting programs hasn't really helped.

One of the things which really makes it annoying to format a quantity of disks is the length of time it takes to do one disk. It's long enough to be really boring to sit through, but not long enough to let you go do something else. If I wander away while a disk is formatting, I usually end up coming back 15 minutes later to find that the disk was finished for at least 12 minutes and I still have 9 more to go!

With this in mind, I wrote this formatting program after receiving the new GFA BASIC Book, from MichTron. The book takes you beyond the 'Basics,' into the inner workings of the ST and this program is built around a highly modified version of a format procedure from the book. With some help from the

GFA BASIC Companion, I had the program up and running very quickly... one of the nicest things about the GFA BASIC system.

The 'Multi-Disk, Multi-Drive Formatter' lets you format using BOTH disk drives, either alternately, or both at once. Thus you can put two disks in, hit RETURN and go do something useful while they format. (Note that it *does* require *two* disk drives to use.) The program does not speed up the actual formatting. It simply allows you to make better use of the time it takes to format disks.

You can choose among three different modes of operation. The first, "Prompted Formatting" will format the first disk, then pause until you press RETURN, giving you a chance to insert a disk into the other drive. The process will repeat, alternating the disk drives.

The second mode is "Continuous Formatting." With this option, the program keeps alternating drives automatically, without pausing. While it formats the first disk, it prompts you to insert the next, and automatically formats the second drive when the first is finished, back and forth.

The third mode of operation is probably the most useful. With "Simultaneous Formatting," you insert two disks and press RETURN. The program will format both disks at the same time, then ring a bell to call you back to pop in the next two disks.

Originally I wrote the formatter using the GFA BASIC Companion to create the text boxes and 'Radio Button' boxes, but the policy of Michtron and Marathon Computer Press is that the .LST routines created by the Companion can only be distributed in programs which are either Compiled or PSAVED (The Companion actually writes Procedures, or subroutines, which you Merge into your own program. It's an excellent time saver!).

For this version of the program, I used the coordinates which the Companion had calculated, and created far simpler text boxes for the various prompts. Instead of the Radio Button box for the formatting parameters, I just used a series of standard ALERT boxes.

To save space and typing time, the program is set up for a Color monitor, in Medium Resolution, but the coordinates for a Monochrome monitor are also given in comments. If you have a Monochrome monitor, simply substitute these numbers for the ones in the program. Also note that the formatting program will only run in Medium Resolution on a Color monitor.

You can choose from the standard selection of formatting parameters by selecting the appropriate buttons in the ALERT boxes. The choices include 9 or 10 sectors per track, 80 or 82 tracks per disk, and Single- or Double-sided formatting. The standard Atari format is 9 sectors and 80 tracks. By choosing more sectors and tracks, you can increase the amount of data the disk will hold, but at some risk of incompatibility and reliability. Additionally, some recent Atari disk drives will *only* format 80 tracks per disk. I *always* format at 10 sectors, 82 tracks and have never had a problem, but that doesn't mean that *you* won't.

The program defaults to 9 sectors, 80 tracks and Single-sided formatting, but the listing shows where you can change these defaults to customize the program for the parameters you prefer. That way, you can just hit RETURN at the ALERT boxes to choose the set-up you like best.

One last little feature I added was to customize the Mouse pointer into a Kitten, for a special friend. The GFA BASIC disk includes a Mouse/Sprite Editor which makes it extremely easy to add this little touch to your own programs. Unfortunately, all the ALERT boxes in this version cause the pointer to revert back to the default arrow shape, but it's enough to give you the idea.

Something I'd like to add in a future version of the formatting program would be a "Twister" format for faster reading of the disk, but that's a subject for another day!

As with any formatting program, use EXTREME CAUTION to avoid accidentally erasing any valuable program or data disks. It's best to keep these out of the area while you're formatting blank disks, just to be sure! (Source code begins on page 8 and can also be downloaded from the Treasure CheST BBS)

VIS

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```
Rem  Multi-Disk, Multi-Drive Formatting Utility   V.1.0
Rem  By Bob Retelle,  December 1987
Rem  Requires GFA BASIC and TWO disk drives

Restart:
Rez=Xbios(4)  ! Rez=0=Low Rez,  Rez=1=Medium Rez,  Rez=2=High Rez
If Rez=0
  Alert 0,"  Sorry, the Formatter|     will only work in|MED or HIGH
  resolution..!",1,"Drat!",Button
  End
Endif

Drv%=1              !Start with Drive A  (will be reversed first time through)
Fat%=5              !5 File allocation table sectors allocated
Di%=112             !112 directory entries allowed
Disks%=1            !Count how many disks have been formatted

Defline 1,5
Deftext 1,0,0,6           !For Hi Rez: 1,0,0,13

Gosub Makemouse     !Customize mouse pointer
Gosub Credits
Gosub Choices
Gosub Warning

Disk%=Disk%-(Auto=3)!If Option 3 is chosen, start with a count of 2

Do                  !Main program loop
  If Auto=3         !Format both drives simultaneously
    Drv%=0
    Gosub Prompt2
    Gosub Format
    Gosub Prompt3
    Inc Disks%
    Key=Asc(A$)
    Goto Action
  Endif
  Drv%=Abs(Drv%=0)  !Alternate Drives
  If Auto=2         !Option 2, automatic alternating of drives
    Gosub Prompt
    Print Chr$(7);  !Ring the bell
    Gosub Format
    Goto Action
  Endif

  Cls               !Option 1, prompted alternating of drives
  Print Chr$(7);    !Ring the bell
  A$="    Drive A"
  If Drv%
    A$="    Drive B"
  Endif
  Alert 0,"  Ready to FORMAT|"+A$+"|Insert new disk and|    press
  RETURN",1,"FORMAT|Abort",Button
  If Button=2
    Goto Abort
  Endif
  Gosub Prompt
  Gosub Format

  Action:
  If Key=27         !Quit if ESC has been pressed
    Goto Abort
  Endif
  Inc Disks%        !Count total disks formatted
Loop

Abort:
Cls
Alert 0,"    All done?     ",1,"Yes/Quit|Restart",Key
If Key=2
  Clear
  Goto Restart
Endif
End
Rem ########### CREDITS procedure ##############
Procedure Credits                                   !HI REZ:
  Rbox 100,20,540,170                               !100,20,540,290
  Text 188,45,"MULTI-DRIVE, MULTI-DISK FORMATTER"   !188,50
  Text 260,65,"By Bob Retelle"                      !260,89
  Text 156,85,"Written with GFA BASIC, the GFA BASIC BOOK"  !156,133
  Text 228,95,"the GFA BASIC COMPANION"             !228,155
  Text 196,115,"Requires TWO floppy disk drives"    !196,199
  Text 204,125,"either Single or Double sided"      !204,221
  Text 292,145,"V. 1.0"                             !292,265
  Repeat
    A$=Inkey$
    K=Mousek
  Until K=1 Or Asc(A$)      !Wait until mouse button or key is pressed
  Pause 10
  Cls
Return
Rem ########### CHOICES procedure ##############
Procedure Choices
  Alert 0,"  Do you want to|Format with 9 or 10|sectors per
  track?",1,"-9-|-10-",Button
  Rem    ^ Change this number to 2 to default to 10 Sectors per Track
  Spt%=9-(Button=2)

  Alert 0,"  Do you want to|format with 80 or 82|  tracks per
  disk?",1,"-80-|-82-",Button
  Rem   ^ Change this number to 2 to default to 82 Tracks per disk
  Trk%=80-2*(Button=2)

  Alert 0,"Do you want to|format Single or|Double
  sided?",1,"SINGLE|DOUBLE",Button
  Rem    ^ Change this number to 2 to default to Double Sided
  Sid%=1-(Button=2)

  Alert 0,"    Do you want PROMPTED,|  CONTINUOUS or
  SIMULTANEOUS|     formatting?",1,"PROMPT|CONT|SIMUL",Auto
Return
Rem ########### WARNING procedure ##############
Procedure Warning                                   !HI REZ:
  Rbox 100,20,540,170                               !100,20,540,320
  Text 220,35,"*** STANDARD WARNING ***"            !220,40
  Text 244,65,"FROM THIS POINT ON"                  !244,89
  Text 284,75,"* ANY *"                             !244,111
  Text 212,85,"DISK IN EITHER DRIVE A OR B"         !212,133
  Text 284,95,"WILL  BE"                            !284,155
  Text 276,105,"* ERASED *"                         !276,199
  Text 196,125,"BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE REMOVED YOUR"  !196,121
  Text 274,135,"PROGRAM DISK"                       !274,243
  Text 168,145,"AND ARE READY TO PROCEED WITH FORMATTING"
                                                    !168,265
  Text 258,155,"YOUR BLANK DISKS"                   !258,287
  Wait:         !Wait until mouse button is pressed, or any key press
  Repeat
    A$=Inkey$
    K=Mousek
  Until K=1 Or Asc(A$)
  Pause 10
  Cls
Return
Rem ###################PROMPT PROCEDURE##############
Procedure Prompt                                    !HI REZ:
  Rbox 150,20,490,140                               !150,20,490,260
  Text 232,45,"INSERT NEW DISK INTO"                !232,57
  D$="DRIVE A"
  If Drv%=0
    D$="DRIVE B"
  Endif
  Text 286,55,D$                                    !286,79
  Text 232,75,"SO IT CAN BE FORMATTED"              !232,123
  Text 254,85,"WHEN THE DISK IN"                    !254,145
  A$="DRIVE B"
  If Drv%=0
    A$="DRIVE A"
  Endif
  Text 286,95,A$                                    !286,167
  Text 272,105,"IS FINISHED"                        !272,189
  Text 244,115,"(PRESS ESC TO QUIT)"                !244,211
  Text 224,125,"Total disks formatted="+Str$(Disks%)  !224,233
```

```
Return
Procedure Prompt2
  Cls
  Rbox 150,20,490,85                                !150,20,490,140
  Text 262,45," **STAND BY** "                      !262,57
  Text 222,65,"NOW FORMATTING BOTH DRIVES"          !221,101
Return
Procedure Prompt3
  Cls
  Rbox 150,20,490,85                                !150,20,490,140
  Text 272,45,"SWITCH DISKS"                        !272,57
  Text 222,55,"PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"           !222,79
  Text 244,65,"(PRESS ESC TO QUIT)"                 !244,101
  Repeat
    Print Chr$(7);
    A$=Inkey$
    Pause 15
  Until Asc(A$)
Return
Rem ################ FORMAT PROCEDURE ################
Procedure Format          !Based on GFA BASIC Book from MichTron
  X=55-24*(Rez=2)         !Position for printing message
  Buf$=String$(20000,0)   !Buffer to hold Boot Sector info
  Void Fre(0)             !Make sure String doesn't move
  Buf%=Varptr(Buf$)       !Find start of buffer
  For T%=0 To Trk%-1
    For S%=0 To Sid%-1
      If Auto=3
        Drv%=0
      Endif
      Print At(28,18);"Formatting Side ";S%+1;", Track ";T%;" ";
      If Auto<>3
        If T%/2=Int(T%/2)                           !Flash next Drive message
          Text 286,X,D$
        Else
          Text 286,X,"        "
        Endif
      Endif
      Otherdrive:
      E%=Xbios(10,L:Buf%,L:0,Drv%,Spt%,T%,S%,1,L:&H87654321,0)
                                                    !Format call
      If E%
        Print At(26,19);"Error formatting Side ";S%+1;" Track ";T%;
      Endif
      If Auto=3 And Drv%=0
        Drv%=1
        Goto Otherdrive
      Endif
    Next S%
  Next T%
  Gosub Boot
  If Auto=3
    Drv%=0
    Gosub Boot
  Endif
  Key=Asc(Inkey$)
Return
Procedure Boot
  Rem Create Boot Sector information in Buffer$
  Sec%=Trk%*Spt%*Sid%
  Buf$=String$(6,0)+Mkl$(Xbios(17))+Chr$(0)+Mki$(2)+Chr$(2)
  Buf$=Buf$+Mki$(&H100)+Chr$(2)+Chr$(Di%)+Chr$(Di%/256)
  Buf$=Buf$+Chr$(Sec%)+Chr$(Sec%/256)+Chr$(Med%)
  Buf$=Buf$+Mki$(Fat%*256)+Mki$(Spt%*256)+Mki$(Sid%*256)
  Buf$=Buf$+Mki$(0)+String$(512,0)
  Void Xbios(9,L:Varptr(Buf$),L:0,Drv%,1,0,0,1)
  Void Bios(7,Drv%)
  Buf$=Mkl$(&HF7FFFF00)+String$(508,0)
  Void Bios(4,1,L:Varptr(Buf$),1,1,Drv%)
  Void Bios(4,1,L:Varptr(Buf$),1,Fat%+1,Drv%)
Return
Rem ############ MAKE MOUSE PROCEDURE ###############
Rem From Mouse Editor provided with GFA BASIC
Procedure Makemouse
  Let Mouse$=Mki$(0)+Mki$(3)+Mki$(1)
  Let Mouse$=Mouse$+Mki$(0)+Mki$(1)
  For I%=1 To 32
    Read Byte
    Let Mouse$=Mouse$+Mki$(Byte)
  Next I%
  Data 7224,8184,8184,32190,24570,32766,4080,4080,8184,16380,16380,16380,
    16376, 8176,4092,2044
  Data 2064,3120,4080,3504,16380,2016,2016,2016,4080,8184,8184,8184,4080,
    2016,512,1016
  Defmouse Mouse$
Return
```

Silicon Spelunking

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As with many tasks on the ST, working with the RS-232 port is both much easier and much harder than with the 8bit. On the upside, you don't need to purchase an interface -- it is built right in. You don't have to worry about programming for 3 or 4 different handlers (850, R-Verter, MPP, 1030) and there aren't as many quirks -- No longer must you worry about opening and closing the R: device during serial I/O. The price you pay for this is the sacrifice of device independance and a somewhat less intuitive approach to programming. The ST BIOS supports the RS-232 port as a numbered device -- always open, always ready. You need only know how to configure it to your needs (baud rate, parity, duplex, etc) and communicate with it.

There are only 4 routines you need to be familiar with to get much of the work done. Rsconf to configure the RS-232 port; Bconstat to see if a character has been received on a device; Bconin to get a single character; and Bconout to send a single character.

void Rsconf(baud, ctrl, ucr, rsr, tsr, scr)

Rsconf is an XBIOS call that takes 5 parameters, only 3 of which are useful in setup. These are baud, ctrl and ucr. Baud may take on values between 0 and 15 and ctrl values from 0 to 3. UCR is the USART control register and requires the setting of individual bits.

I usually set ucr to 0x88 which is short for no parity, 1 start bit, 1 stop bit, 8 data bits. All other parameters should be set to -1 so that they will not be changed by the call.

baud	Baud rate	ucr bit	Purpose
0	19200	0	unused
1	9600	1	0=odd parity, 1=even
2	4800	2	0=no parity (ignore bit 1)
3	3600		1=use bit 1
4	2400	4,3	00=0 start, 0 stop
5	2000		01=1 start, 1 stop
6	1800		10=1 start, 1.5 stop
7	1200		11=1 start, 2 stop
8	600	6,5	00=8 bit word
9	300		01=7 bit word
10	200		10=6 bit word
11	150		11=5 bit word
12	134	7	0=Take frequency from TC/RC
13	110		(Synchronous)
14	75		1=Use (TC+RC)/16
15	50		(Asynchronous)

ctrl	Meaning	ctrl	Meaning
0	No handshaking	1	XON/XOFF
2	RTS/CTS	3	Both XON/XOFF and RTS/CTS

int Bconstat(dev)

Bconstat is a BIOS routine that returns a status for the device you specify. A return of 0 indicates that there are no characters ready to be read from the device and a return of -1 indicates that there are one or more characters ready. As with Bconin and Bconout, the following device numbers are used:

dev	Device
0	Printer interface
1	RS-232 interface
2	Keyboard/screen
3	MIDI interface
4	IKBD

Bconin(dev)

Bconin simply reads a character from the specified device. It does not check for control-C or any other special character, and does not return until it has read a character, so you may find it useful to call Bconstat to see if there is a character ready before you call Bconin to get the character.

int Bconout(dev,c)

Bconout sends the character c to the specified device. The function returns as soon as the character is output. Note that on a buffered device, this will return as soon as it is registered in the buffer, not when it has actually been sent to the device.

In addition, it is very useful to be able to set or detect the state of, various lines such as DTR (data terminal ready), CD (carrier detect), CTS (clear to send), and RTS (request to send). What follows is a brief description of each. Both DTR and RTS are controlled by the General Instruments sound chip while CD and CTS are functions of the MFP68901 multi-function peripheral chip. Take a look at the example program for the actual calls.

DTR

The DTR line is used to tell your modem if you are ready for I/O or not. A side benefit of this is that if you tell the modem you are not ready, it will drop carrier and not accept calls until it is again told you are ready. You can set or clear the DTR line via Ongibit and Offgibit.

CD

The CD (carrier detect) line is used to tell if your modem has a carrier -- i.e. it has connected with another modem. You can read this line via peeking a memory location.

CTS/RTS

The clear to send line is also read from a memory

location, but is of limited use when working with modems. CTS and RTS are both primarily used in the handshaking of serial printers where CTS indicates that it is ok to send a character and RTS tells the computer that it no longer has to wait. RTS can be set in the same manner as DTR.

Finally, it can be very useful to see the current settings of, or change the settings of the I/O buffers. This is achieved via the Iorec call.

long Iorec(dev)

Iorec is a tricky call. Not only is dev numbered differently for this function than with the BIOS routines, but it also appears to return nothing of much use. In fact, it returns a pointer to a structure that can tell you all about the devices input and output buffers. All of the devices supported by this call have input buffers, and the RS-232 device also has an output buffer which is located right after its input buffer. To make use of this call, you must define a pointer to the needed structure and then use Iorec to set the pointer. From then on you can check the values of the structure, or even set them, by referring to the fields in the structure. The values for dev are:

0 RS-232
1 Keyboard
2 MIDI

Putting it All Together

Perhaps the best way to see how this all fits together is with a simple terminal program. Even the simplest terminal program addresses the questions of how to configure the port, send and receive data, and play around with some of the RS-232 lines. In this month's example you can also see how to handle duplex and echoplex in your code.

To get a working program out of this, you need to type in and compile the two separate parts, RS232.C and TERM.C using the MegaMax C compiler. If you have another compiler, simple adjustments may be neccessary.

If you would like to download the text of this article, or the example program, or just want to discuss ST programming – call the Neon Brain at 313/747-6260 and 'join atari.' You can reach it via Merit.

Suggested Reading: ATARI ST Internals, Abacus book #2

Next Month: Working with the joystick and mouse.

```
/* RS232.c - RS232 line handling functions for the ST
 *  by Bill Root, Brian Hall
 *  Copyright (c)1987 Innovision
 * Created 08/10/87
 * Updated 12/16/87  */
#include <stdio.h>
#include <osbind.h>
#include "defs.h"
#define IOPORT 0xfffa01

struct iorec {
  BYTE *io_buf;
  WORD io_bufsiz;
  WORD io_head;
  WORD io_tail;
  WORD io_highwater;
  WORD io_lowwater;
} *iop;
BYTE peek(addr)
  long addr;
{
  long stack = 0;
  static BYTE theByte;
  char *place;
  stack = Super(stack);
  place = (char *) addr;
  theByte = *place;
  Super(stack);
  return theByte;
}

/* cts returns the status of the clear-to-send line  */
cts()
{
  return ( !(peek(IOPORT) & 0x04) );
}

/* cd returns the status of the carrier detect line */
cd()
{
  return ( !(peek(IOPORT) & 0x02) );
}

/* dtr sets the data-terminal-ready line to that of state */
dtr(state)
  register int state;
{
  if (state) Offgibit(0xef);
  else Ongibit(0x10);
}

/* rts set the request-to-send line to that of state */
rts(state)
  register int state;
{
  if (state) Offgibit(0xf7);
  else Ongibit(0x08);
}

/* Reduce the size of the AUX buffer
 * Must use 0 for Iorec because of DAMN OS Inconsistency! */
kill_buf()
{
iop = (struct iorec *) Iorec(0);
iop[1].io_head = iop[1].io_tail = 0;
iop[1].io_bufsiz = 1;
}
```

```
/* Term.c - A simple terminal program
 *  by Brian Hall
 *  Copyright (c)1987 Innovision
 * Created 08/14/87
 * Updated 12/19/87  */
#include <stdio.h>
#include <osbind.h>
#include "defs.h"

int
  echoplex,             /* Echoplex on/off flag */
  duplex,               /* Full/Half duplex flag */
  baud,                 /* The current baud rate */
  max_baud=1200;        /* The max rate, also the starting rate */

/* flush any input from the RS-232 port  */
aux_flush()
{
  while (Bconstat(AUX))
  Bconin(AUX);
}

/* this function pauses for the specified number
  of 1/200 seconds */
delay(time)
  int time;
{
  long stack = 0;
  register long ltime;
  ltime = (long) time;
  stack = Super( stack );
  asm {
    move.l 0x4ba, D0
    add.l  ltime, D0
    loop:
    cmp.l  0x4ba, D0
    bge    loop
  }
  Super(stack);
}

/* Code to hangup the modem */
hangup()
{
  dtr(FALSE);
  delay(100);
  while (cd());
  dtr(TRUE);
}
/* This will set AUX to the passed rate, or 300 (default) */
int set_baud(rate)
  int rate;
{
  static int rates[]={
    19200, 9600, 4800, 3600, 2400, 2000, 1800,
    1200, 600, 300, 200, 150, 134, 110, 75, 50 };
  int val;
  switch (rate) {
    case 19200: val=0; break;
    case 9600: val=1; break;
    case 4800: val=2; break;
    case 3600: val=3; break;
    case 2400: val=4; break;
    case 2000: val=5; break;
    case 1800: val=6; break;
    case 1200: val=7; break;
    case 600: val=8; break;
    case 300: val=9; break;
    case 200: val=10; break;
    case 150: val=11; break;
    case 134: val=12; break;
    case 110: val=13; break;
    case 75: val=14; break;
    case 50: val=15; break;
    default: val=9;
  }
  Rsconf( val, 0, UCR, -1, -1, -1);
  delay(30);
  aux_flush();
  baud=rates[val];
  return baud;
}

termhelp()
{
  puts("\nKey    Function");
  puts("---  ----------");
  puts("HELP   Print this list");
  puts("UNDO   Return to Plexus");
  printf("F1     Change baud rate (%d)\n",baud);
  printf("F2     Toggle Duplex ");
  if (duplex) puts("(Full)");
  else puts("(Half)");
  printf("F3     Toggle Echoplex ");
  if (echoplex) puts("(On)");
  else puts("(Off)");
  puts("F4     Hangup\n");
}

changebaud()
{
  char ln[81];
  int tmp;
  printf("New baud rate:",ln);
  gets(ln);
  tmp=set_baud(atoi(ln));
  printf("Now at %d baud.\n",tmp);
}

main()
{
  long key;
  int ch;
  duplex = echoplex = FALSE;
  puts("\033E");
  set_baud(max_baud);
  termhelp();
  while (1) {
    if (Bconstat(AUX)) {
        ch=Bconin(AUX) & 0x7f;
        Bconout(CON,ch);
        if (echoplex) Bconout(AUX,ch);
    }
    if (Bconstat(CON)) {
        key = Bconin(CON);
        ch = key & 0xff;
        if (key==K_HELP)
        termhelp();
        else if (key==K_UNDO)
        return 1;
        else if (key==K_F1)
        changebaud();
        else if (key==K_F2) {
          if (duplex) {
            duplex = FALSE;
```

```
            puts("\033pFull Duplex\033q\n");
          }
          else {
            duplex = TRUE;
            puts("\033pHalf Duplex\033q\n");
          }
      }
      else if (key==K_F3) {
          if (echoplex) {
            echoplex = FALSE;
            puts("\033pEchoplex OFF\033q");
          }
          else {
            echoplex = TRUE;
            puts("\033pEchoplex ON\033q");
          }
      }
      else if (key==K_F4)
        hangup();
      else if (ch>0) {
        if (duplex) Bconout(CON,ch);
        if (ch == 10) Bconout(AUX,13);
        Bconout(AUX,ch);
      }
    } /* if */
  } /* while */
}

/* defs.h
 * ST Version
 * Created: 02/13/87
* Updated: 12/11/87 */
/* Compiler used */
 #define MEGAMAX 1
/* Logic values */
 #define TRUE1
 #define FALSE0

/* Measures of memory */
 #define BYTE unsigned char
 #define WORD int
 #define LONG long

/* BIOS devices */
 #define PRT 0
 #define AUX 1
 #define CON 2
 #define MIDI 3
 #define IKBD 4

 #define MAXERR 255

/* Scan code values for various keys */
 #define K_ESC  0x0001001bL
 #define K_HELP 0x00620000L
 #define K_UNDO 0x00610000L
 #define K_F1   0x003b0000L
 #define K_F2   0x003c0000L
 #define K_F3   0x003d0000L
 #define K_F4   0x003e0000L
 #define K_F5   0x003f0000L
 #define K_F6   0x00400000L
 #define K_F7   0x00410000L
 #define K_F8   0x00420000L
 #define K_F9   0x00430000L
 #define K_F10  0x00440000L

 #define UCR 0x88
```

On the Fritz

Hardware Tricks and Tips from Bob Fritz

Q) I saw your last column in which you mentioned Wico trackballs could be modified to work on the ST. How can this be done?

A) It involves making a small circuit board with an LM339 quad comparator some resistors and changing the wiring. So you see it's not just a wire switch to get it going beside the fact that the Wico trackball has been discontinued. Best to just pick one up for the $30 and if you've got a Wico laying around maybe you can work out a deal with Zebra on a trade in. (If enough interest, and room, I can put the whole How-To article in a future issue.

Q) I purchased an ST way back in May '86. Recently, I bought a newer single-sided drive. On my old drive, I can read all my extended format disks (82 sectors, 10 tracks), but the new drive just won't cut it. Also, some of the software I have (like Brataccas) won't boot from the newer drive. What's the problem, and can it be fixed?

A) That is a problem facing all new ST owners 520/1040STFM/MEGA alike. The problem is Atari switched mechanisms for some reason, probably cost or availability. The newer drives are 80-track drives whereas the older ones could read and write 82. Atari's specs on the drives, both old and new, say they are 80 tracks, 0-79. There is no fix at this time other then to send your software that uses track 82 in it's protection scheme back to the manufacturer stating your problem or to go with a non-Atari drive such as the Indus GTS 100 which can read and write 84 tracks.

Q) I have a 130XE, and I recently was given a 20 meg IBM internal hard drive with IBM controller. Is it possible to hook this up to my Atari? What other hardware do I need, and about how much would it cost?

A) The people to contact are ICD in Rockford, IL. They should be able to set you up with a controller, case, power supply, etc., and the proper adapter for the XE. Another place to try is Supra Corp. in Albany OR. They make a hard drive for the 8bits and may be able to fill your needs. Addresses:

ICD	SUPRA CORPORATION
1220 Rock St.	1133 Commercial way
Rockford,IL 61101	Albany,OR 97321
(815)968-2228	(503)967-9075

Add-on Modem Speaker

By D.F. Neff (MACE, WAUG!)

Introduction

Telecommunication is a frustrating experience for any novice. Unfortunately, it is made even more frustrating by modem manufacturers who elect to reduce costs by eliminating the modem speaker. I, like many novices, began with an Atari 1030 modem (without a speaker) when they went on sale after the release of the XM301.

I spent many late-night hours trying – and failing – to connect with BBSes from a list the modem salesman had given me. After trying everything I could think of, but having little success, I realized the problem may not be me, the modem or the software I was using. The problem had to be on the other end of the phone line.

In a flash of inspiration, I connected a speaker-phone to the modem jack and redialed the modem while listening to the speaker-phone. Almost instantly, a recorded voice told me that the number I had dialed was disconnected! I had wasted hours trying to connect to a BBS that didn't exist. Dialing the rest of the numbers on the list revealed a more horrifying fact. Some of the BBS numbers had been disconnected so long that they were reassigned as peoples' home phone numbers. My late-night BBS calls had been waking up innocent victims who probably thought they were receiving crank calls. Most BBSes have a very short life and as a result, the list I received from the salesman was outdated.

There is a lesson for you to learn from my experience: if you are using a modem without a speaker, *stop* doing it. If you have a speaker-phone, connect it to your modem jack so you can hear the result of your modem call. If you don't have a speaker-phone, build the external modem speaker described in this article. Either way, you'll save yourself some frustration by learning which BBS numbers are valid. At the same time you'll spare some people the anguish of thinking they're the victim of crank calls.

Construction

Figure 1 shows the schematic diagram of the external modem speaker amplifier. Build the circuit on the printed circuit board using Figure 2 as a guide to the pin arrangement of IC1 and its socket. Do not place IC1 in the socket until all soldering has been completed on the entire circuit. The heat of the soldering iron may damage the IC chip.

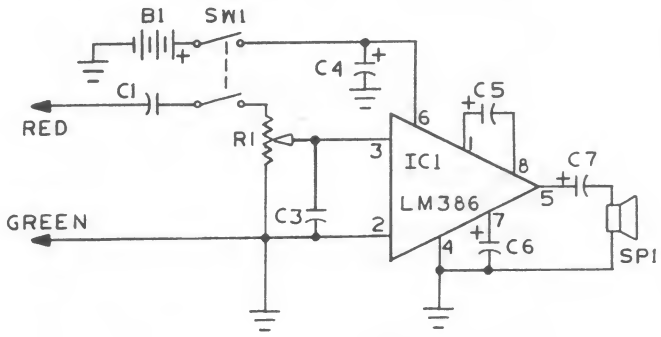

Figure One

Pay close attention to the polarity of capacitors C3, C4, C5, and C6. Some manufacturers mark the negative side of their capacitors, while others mark the positive side. (One of my disk drives came from Atari with half of the filter caps installed backwards because of this.) C1 is a special nonpolarized capacitor required for this type of service. Do not substitute a polarized capacitor for C1.

R1 is a trimpot which provides volume control. You may want to substitute a standard volume control (RS# 271-1721) if you find yourself adjusting the volume frequently.

The speaker indicated in the parts list comes already mounted in an attractive wood case. The circuit board containing the finished amplifier can be mounted on the back of this speaker case with small screws.

Using It

The phone line to your modem contains four wires colored red, black, yellow and green. We will use only two of these: red and green. The red wire connects to one end of C1, and the green wire connects to a ground point in the circuit as shown in Figure 1.

Boot up your modem software and then switch on your new modem speaker. Set the volume control to about 50% volume to begin with. Now have your modem dial your own phone number to get a busy signal on the line. Adjust the volume control to give you a comfortable volume level with the busy signal. Further adjustment of the volume may have to be done during your first few calls to a BBS. You may find that the dialing sound from the modem is too

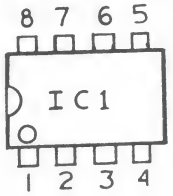

Figure Two

loud for comfort (especially at night when family members are sleeping).

The squealing sounds you hear when a BBS answers are the result of the two computers talking to each other. You can switch the modem speaker off as soon as you hear that sound.

With your add-on modem speaker, you'll always know why you couldn't connect with the BBS you just called. You'll be surprised how many disconnected numbers you've been calling all this time!

PARTS LIST

Item	Description	Radio Shack#
B1	9 Volt Batt.	272-1022
C1	10uF,Nonpolar	272-999
C3	.01 uF Cap	272-1065
C4, C6	10uF Cap	272-1025
C5	100uF Cap	272-1044
C7	220uF Cap	272-1029
IC1	LM386 Amp	276-1731
R1	Trimpot	271-218
SP1	Speaker	40-1250
SW1	DPDT Switch	275-614

MISCELLANEOUS

–	Batt. Clip	270-326
–	Batt. Plug	270-325
–	IC Socket	276-1995
–	PC Board	276-168
–	Wire,screws	

Making Old Software Work with New ROMs

by Michael Schuster (Reprinted from ZMAG #78)

520/1040 ST owners who install the new (4/87) "blit" ROMs in their machines, and buyers of Mega STs may be rudely awakened to the fact that some older software will not run properly. (XL/XE owners please note that strange feeling of deja-vu!)

Copy-protection routines of some games fall apart because of the differences in the way TOS returns CRC errors on disk reads now. I shall not deal with those here. Rather, I wish to share my experiences in trouble-shooting a common, and more easily remedied problem: illegal use of system storage locations.

During the early ST development period Atari released a list of system variables whose locations were to be "cast in stone" – guaranteed not to move in any future version of TOS. These locations range from $400 to $512, and Atari's promise does indeed seem to have been kept. However, as before (this is where the XL parallel comes in) programmers insisted on using unsupported system storage locations (including the range from $840 to $A0FF) to do things more quickly or using more compact code. As warned, however, these have all been moved.

In searching through memory and trying to make some sense out of all this mess, it appeared to me that there is a block of system storage locations $46 bytes long, which have been inserted somewhere between $840 and $93E. (Hmmm...can we say "blitter" boys and girls?) The result is that the original locations of many storage locations past this point have been shifted $46 bytes upwards.

How does this help us? If we can get some idea of what a program is doing when it bombs under the new ROMs, we can look to see if this is occurring because of the use of a storage location that has been moved, and zap the program with a sector editor. Of course, if one has the source code for a program, they can simply edit it and recompile.

Some Examples

The source code for Twister clearly indicates the use of the floppy control blocks to keep track of disk drive status. If you run Twister under the new ROMs, it returns an error as soon as the disk drive tries to step. Aha!! Solution: Search for $0A06 and change to $0A4C; search for $0A0A and change to $0A50. These occur once each in both Twister and the Meg-A-Minute hard disk backup program.

The same applies to those programs which change the drive B step rate for those using external 5.25" drives. See below for details.

K-Switch, Nite, and older versions of GFA BASIC look at the system location kb_shift to read the control, alternate and shift keys (INSTEAD of using the legal BIOS 11 call). Since these programs all have features activated by combinations of these keys, they will not work as written under the new ROMs. Solution: Search for $E1B and replace with $E61.

Warnings!

Zapping of commercial programs may be a violation of copyright. You must be sure you are within your legal rights to modify any program before attempting to do so.

→

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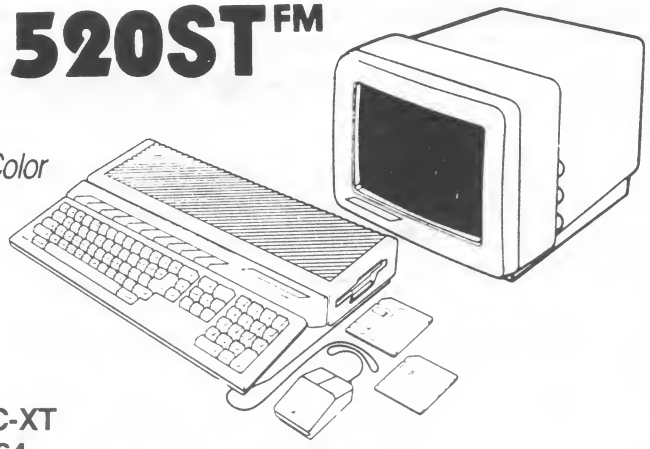

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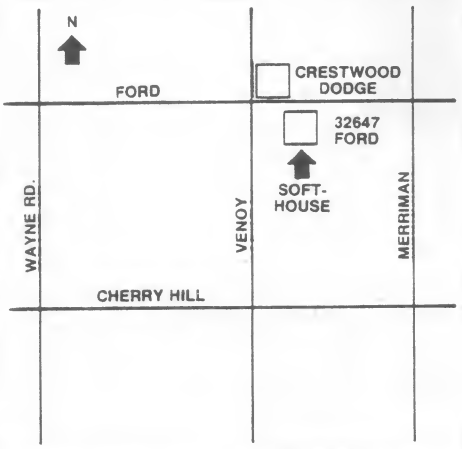

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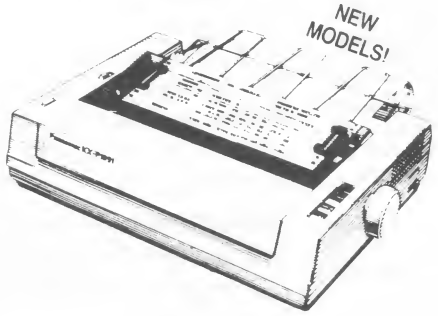

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Programs so zapped *may not run under the old roms.* It only makes sense that if you replace illegal locations with newer illegal locations, the program is now even *more*illegal!

Putting this all to Use

Following is a list of the system storage areas mentioned above. They also happen to be the ones most commonly abused. Then comes MY estimation of where they have been moved to. For those not on the list, within this region, you can simply try adding $46 to the old value. Use this information with care, and *only on a backup copy of your software.* I cannot be responsible for *anything* which results from the use of the information herein.

Be sure that what you are zapping is really a memory location and not data, text, or opcodes which happen to match the byte pattern of the number you are searching for. Often, a memory location will appear in long form when assembled (e.g. 00000XXX) and that can be a clue that it's not text or data. If it doesn't work, make another copy of the original, and look for another zap point. Good luck!

Old Location	New Location	Description
$A06 (word)	$A4C (word)	Floppy #0 Current Track
$A08 (word)	$A4E (word)	Floppy #0 Seek Rate
$A0A (word)	$A50 (word)	Floppy #1 Current Track
$A0C (word)	$A52 (word)	Floppy #1 Seek Rate
$E1B (byte)	$E61 (byte)	Keyboard Shift Status

I am maintaining an ever-increasing list of these. I would appreciate any new date or applications for this type of information. First Prize to the kind soul who can re-write STARTGEM to run under the new OS. I can be reached at: Michael Schuster, Compuserve [70346,17451], GEnie, Delphi, MCI [MSchuster], Usenet [schuster@dasyst.UUCP], The Night Shift BBS (718)816-7792.

Using Alternate Character Sets

by Charlie Henrich

Here is a program for all you BASIC programmers who wish to use alternate character sets in your projects. This can give you the ability to create graphic screens equivalent to Graphics Mode 8 but with more versatility in detecting collisions and such. Lines 190-210 are the heart of the loader where FILE$ is the name of the file with the device number and extender attached. To use the main program, your character sets should use the ".FNT" extender. You can also learn other "tricks" by dissecting this program, e.g. how to add extenders and devices to a file name input by the user and other string manipulations. The "Number of Pages" defines the amount of memory you wish to reserve for storage of your alternate character set data. Remove POKE 712,Q in line 200 if you don't want the border to flash when the character set is being loaded. Have Fun!

```
10 GRAPHICS 0:POKE 710,6:POKE 712,144:POKE 82,0:POKE709,
   12:POKE 752,1:? "<ESC><SHFT-CLEAR>":REM CLEAR
   SCREEN AND SET COLORS
20 DIM LN$(5000)
30 OPEN #1,6,0,"D:*.FNT"
40 INPUT #1,LN$
50 IF ASC(LN$(1,1))>32 THEN ? :GOTO 70
60 ? LN$(1,10)
70 TRAP 80:GOTO 40
80 CLOSE #1
90 DIM D(15),FILE(15):POKE 752,0
100 ? "Name of File ";:INPUT D$:D$(LEN(D$)+1)=".FNT"
110 FILE$="D1:":FILE$(LEN(FILE$)+1)=D$
120 ? :? "Number of Pages ";:INPUT PG
130 X=PEEK(106)-PG
140 POKE 709,6:POKE 752,0:? "<ESC><SHFT-CLEAR>":REM
    CLEAR SCREEN
150 ? "Type: POKE 756,";PEEK(756):? "To Use ROM-Set"
160 ? :? "Type: POKE 756,";X:? "To Use New Set"
170 REM  **** LOADER ****
180 CHBAS=X*256
190 OPEN #1,4,0,FILE$:FOR X=0 TO 1023
200 GET #1,Q:POKE CHBAS+X,Q:POKE 712,Q:NEXT X
210 ? :? :POKE 752,0:POKE 709,12:POKE 712,144
```

Software Piracy - My Thoughts

Author Unknown

I've just made a decision. I'm going to stop pirating software. Some of you are probably thinking, "Wow, you mean he steals programs?" and the others (the majority, I believe) are thinking, "Man, why the heck you gonna stop piratin'?" Well, I think I can answer you both.

The turning point was a conversation I had with a local SysOp. He told me the reason why so many software companies are not producing programs for Atari anymore is because it's becoming unprofitable! So many people are simply stealing these programs via bulletin boards or trading with friends, that these companies are not making money any more. He told me the author of a word processing program, Paperclip, had the exact same royalty contract for the Commodore 64 and the Atari version. The author,

→

allegedly, made a LOT of money even last year (something like $1800) on C-64 sales, but made something like $89 in royalty from his Atari sales! And now, quite obviously, he probably won't be making much else for the Atari.

And do you know what the topper is? I'm using a pirated version of Paperclip, right now, to write this!

Do you know the reasoning most software pirates use to condone their acts? "Man, they charge so much for software these days! Then, when you've spent all that money, you find that the program stinks! You've wasted $20-50 on a horrible game!" That is reasonable logic, in a way. We've all been burned by software. I bought Canyon Climber, when I first got my computer. I thought it would be like the arcade game Crazy Climber. It wasn't. I bought Astro Chase, and didn't like it. There have been others.

It was about then when I started accepting commercial software without paying. My friend had an 800, and he would copy a few of the games he had for my cassette drive, and I'd let him at my stuff.

Next came my first glance at the sleaziest pirate I have ever met. I answered an ad in the Wheeler Dealer, for a few cartridges he had for sale. When I got there, he opened a briefcase and showed me about every game that was on the market at the time. "For $5," he said, "I'll let you have anything. If you bought it new, it'd cost you much more!" So I did it. It was a great deal, I thought. Getting the best games for a fraction of the cost. Now, upon reflecting this, I am sorry I ever did it. Not only was he pirating, but he was profiting from others' hard work! That's like taking a book, rewriting it, then selling it for less. All the others I've dealt with have been friends (mostly acquaintances) that I've met in various places.

I'll admit that, up until recently, I never really thought about it as being wrong. I mean, I knew I was taking programs without justly compensating the author, but I could always use that basic 'pirate' logic to make myself believe that what I was doing was all right. Lets face it, I never *would* have bought most of the things I have now. Pirating did help me to see what programs I like and don't like. But I can't possibly use that as a valid excuse, since I have *never* bought a program after seeing if I liked the pirated version.

Take Paperclip, for instance. This is a marvelous word processor! I use it exclusively. I *should* go out and purchase a legitimate copy. But, not only do I have the program, but the person who gave me the copy also xeroxed the entire manual for me! So, I suddenly have no reason to go out and buy it. I've never felt guilty about it, but I think I oughta start.

If you pirate now, just read the rest of this. I'm no narc, and I'm not about to hate all my pirating friends for cheating authors out of making a living, but I'm not going to take any more illegally copied software.

Think about it. Everybody is trying to make a living. We all need money to survive in this world, and software programmers are no different. You wouldn't want someone to take something that *you* spent many, many hours, up late at night, trying to perfect, would you? After slaving over anything for that long, to have someone break into your lab and steal it would just crush you, right? Well, it *is* the same thing!

You can think, "Someone will buy it, so I don't have to!" or, "They get a salary, so they don't have any problems!" but you really don't know that. It's like a lot of things. You can toss a beer can out your speeding car, and feel OK by using the logic, "Well, since other people don't litter, mine won't affect anything." But if everybody thought that, this world would be a dump. We all should *be* that 'other' consciencious person, because we simply don't know if anyone else will.

I know what I'm saying here may not change much. But it is now something I feel strongly about. Stealing is wrong, regardless. If you believe in God, then think, "Does stealing bother Him?" Isn't, "Thou shalt not steal" a commandment? It's also illegal. Finally, always keep in mind if more people continue to pirate, more and more software dealers will just give up selling altogether. Tell me, what good is a computer without software?

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Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the world of Atari St computers

Calisthenics for the mind...., or resolutions you really never intended to keep.

...Write an article for the journal, what a nifty idea ! With the proliferation of Utilities, Games, Word Processors, and the ilk, there must be a growing number of you that can offer articles for publication. All of us have a deep and growing interest in the ST, why not share your knowledge with us, and help us learn in the process. Writing is a rich and rewarding experience that you just may find you will enjoy.

Most people I speak to tell me that they are unable to put their ideas into words, yet they are able to speak for endless hours on the same topic. Let's face it, the real difference is the effort required to put those same words on paper. Not such a difficult assignment, so let's see some input from *you !*

Publishing Partner...

Softlogic, producers of "Publishing Partner" has released another update (version 1.03) of their very popular program for the ST. This release was to have corrected all of the bugs in the previous version, but not all of the little critters were caught.. Here is a partial list of some that were corrected.

You may now load any number of fonts into your font selector box without affecting your screen font display.

Previous versions would crash if you attempted to enter a NUL character into your document without creating a column. This problem is now resolved.

It is now possible to access a desk accessory like the control panel while using Publishing Partner. Had you tried this on the earlier versions, you could not close the window, once opened.

The Helvetica font is now the standard default font loaded at boot up in the program. If you do not have a config.inf file on your disk, this is immensely helpful. Prior to this change, only the SYSTEM fonts (2) would be loaded.

Now, when you copy text to the buffer that has Tab stops imbedded in it, the tabs are copied with the Text when you use the paste otion. This was a very important correction, since much time could be lost repairing text that did not cut and paste properly.

There are however, more than a few bugs left to squash, to make Publishing Partner the great program that is can be. With their concentration currently on the new version, soon to be released, under the name ***"Publishing Partner Professional"*** presumably, they will correct many of the bugs in this latest release, by default. One can only hope so.

The professional version is scheduled for release some time in the first quarter of 1988. Here are some of the major features it will offer...

- Auto Text overflow around any graphics object. (yippee)
- Auto hyphenation
- Auto kerning
- Grouping of objects
- Recorder pages
- Use of Degas compressed pics
- Use of Easy Draw and IMG pics
- Ability to import text files from Word Perfect, 1st Word, and Word Writer.
- View up to 6 documents at a time
- Enhanced Disk Utilities
- Undo command
- Recall text
- Search and Replace
- Variable grid with snap
- Insert/Delete multiple pages
- Zoom command

These are the major changes. The new release will be the closest thing to real Desktop Publishing yet. Coming to a printer near you soon.

Atari Corp. has released information on some of the latest products supposedly on their way to market. They win the "vaporware" award of 1987 for some of the products announced, but never delivered. Here are some of their latest...

- The new Abaq "Transputer". Running on an INMOS T-800, 32 bit RISC (reduced instruction set) processor, the Abaq uses the ST for a terminal. The system now in the works uses 4 mbytes of memory plus an additional mbyte for the display. It may be expanded by adding up to three cards, each of which can host 4 more T-800 processors. Each T-800 can perform 1200 MIPS (Million Instructions per Second). They may be daisy chained to share complex tasks. Screen modes will be 1280 x 960 with 16 colour, or 512x480 in 16 million colours. The entire system will operate under HELIOS, a UNIX clone now in development. I reserve final comment on this one..... just too much to swallow at once.

May the force be with you....

Is ANALOG Magazine Doomed?

Open Letter to Mr. Des Chenes
by Don Neff

The big question for 1988 is: will Analog magazine survive? Some user group newsletters are saying Analog has already gone out of business. I can understand how they came to that conclusion; some Analog subscribers around here (Mich, Ohio, Ind., Ill.) haven't received an issue since late 1986 or early 1987.

As president of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, I receive many comments and questions about our members' unfilled Analog subscriptions. Perhaps the members feel I can use my position to get Analog to address their concerns. Unfortunately, I'm one of the many who may have wasted their money by sending it to Analog. Analog hasn't responded to my calls or letters either.

Subscribers who called the subscription problem hot-line (1-800-345-8112) were told: "The (pick any month) issue is late because of problems with our printer. Your copy will be mailed next week." Of course, our copy never seems to get mailed. Letters of inquiry to Mr. Pappas, Mr. Des Chenes, et al, are never answered. Magazine vendors couldn't help us since they weren't receiving their store copies either.

I know Analog is still in business because they just sent me two renewal notices for my disk/magazine subscription. That's right, for $105 I can be treated to another year of Analog vaporware and neglect, just like 1987!

The Atari community needs Analog but, we can survive without it if necessary. Analog, on the other hand, can't survive without the Atari community. They know they need us; that's why they send subscription renewal notices. With that thought in mind, Mr. Des Chenes and his crew should stop hiding from us and address our concerns if they expect us to subscribe again.

Analog has always been one of my favorite computer magazines, and I will miss it if it dies. I like the cover art, I like the articles, I like the programs (even though there are too many games). I like Analog period. I don't want to see it die. It will die though, if enough unhappy subscribers decide not to renew their subscriptions.

That's why, Mr. Des Chenes, I am sending you a copy of this magazine, containing this article, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, so you may respond to the questions of your subscribers who haven't received their money's worth from you. Our questions are:

1. Is Analog going out of business?
2. Why didn't you send our magazines in 1987?
3. Why didn't you let us know what was happening with our subscriptions?
4. If you stay in business, how will you compensate us for our unfilled 1987 subscriptions?
5. Why should we take a chance on you and renew our Analog subscriptions in 1988?

If you respond to these concerns, we'll print your unedited reply in the next issue of this magazine (which is circulated to user groups nationwide). You obviously can't respond to your subscribers in your own magazine because you're not sending it to us for some reason. Let Michigan Atari Magazine be your vehicle for getting your response to the user groups and ultimately, to their members who are your subscribers.

In the mean time, I recommend that all Atari users refuse to subscribe to Analog magazine until you explain why you treat your subscribers so poorly. If you and Analog are having problems, then be honest enough to tell us. You may find that you've spent the last year hiding from friends who want your business to succeed just as much as you do!

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Living with the XEP80

A Subjective Review by Wally Wong, Reprint from Dec. '87 Puget Sound Atari News.

Yes, folks, it's finally here, the long-awaited 80-column adaptor from Atari, the XEP80. Actually, it's more than an 80-column display module, it's also a parallel printer interface. There are some delights and some plights you should be aware of, as well as a plethora of potential programming hacking that could keep some Atari enthusiast awake many a night.

The Atari XEP80 Interface Module is an 80-column video display controller and "standard" parallel printer interface for all 8bit computers with a minimum of 16K RAM. The XEP80 looks just like the Atari SX212 modem – same size, dimension and color -- minus the lights on the front panel. The XEP80 comes with just about everything you need: video cable to connect the module to a composite monitor (monochrome recommended), power supply adaptor (Egads! Another one; that makes six tucked under my desk!), the module, a 20-page owner's manual, a warranty card (that no one I know sends in) and a 5.25" distribution card, all for $79.99 list.

A nice, long cable runs out the rear of the module that connects to your computer via joystick port one or two. Most will probably elect to use port two and keep the other available for a joystick. No problem, except one of the demo programs (WINDOW.BAS) will only work if the joystick is in port two and the module plugged into one.

The power switch is located in the rear and a tiny diagonal window emits a subtle green light on the front panel when the power is on. The video cable is a simple cable with RCA male jack on both ends. One end connects to the rear of the module, and the other to your composite monitor (sorry, no TVs allowed).

The parallel printer port is a standard DB25 parallel female connector like those found on the STs and IBM-type systems; not an Atari 850 or P:R: Connection connector. The reason for using DB25 connection is for "standardization" which means you can obtain a printer cable from just about any computer store (but we will make our purchases at our local Atari vendors, right!!), and not be handcuffed to "Atari Only" vendors who would be the only ones carrying 850/PRC parallel cables. If you wish to use only the parallel printer port, hold down the shift key while booting the disk and continue to hold until it's done loading. This will allow output to the printer, maintaining the normal 40 columns through the computer video port or RF. Here is what the owner's manual says about selection the printer port:

> When you start up your system with the XEP80 Module, the module is prepared to direct output to a printer throught the parallel port (P1:). Specifiying P2: directs output to the Atari 850 Interface Module; P3: outputs to the 1025 printer; P4: to the 1020 Color Plotter; P5: to the 1027 Printer; P6: to the 1029 Printer; P7: to the XMM801 Printer; and P8: to the XDM121 Printer.

There is a PRINTER.BAS program on the distribution disk. This allows you to make adjustments to the printer interface configuration, i.e. light or heavy translation and device unit; P1:, P2:, etc. The XEP80 also sports an internal 2K buffer for printing. Nice touch. (Don't throw away your old printer interface just yet; I'll tell you why in a bit.)

Turn on the XEP80, monitor, disk drive(s). Insert the XEP80 disk (of course you made a copy of the original, right?), and turn on the computer. The XEP80 handler comes as an AUTORUN.SYS file so it will boot up automatically. If your monitor is adjusted to give you a full screen with a normal 40 column screen (like mine), the first thing you will notice is the bottom half of the last three characters of the READY prompt of BASIC in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. If you type DOS to get to the DOS menu (DOS 2.5 is included on the disk), the first line of the heading is tucked somewhere beneath the top of your monitor chassis.

The next thing you will notice is the bunch of tiny characters (relative to 40-column characters) on the screen! Folks, you now have an 80-column display. The characters are quite readable on the BMC, Technika and Commodore 1702 color composite monitors. The display looks GREAT on a monochrome composite monitor (once I got mine to work properly).

The characters are defined within a 7x10 cell (7wide x 10high) compared to 8x8 cell used normally. I think this is the reason for the truncated display at the top of the screen; the characters are taller than normal and pushing the top of the display. Now, this is just a guess; I'm not a video display wiz. This can be corrected by adjusting the vertical width.

Correcting for 80 columns will create a smaller vertical screen when you return to 40 columns. This is okay if the vertical adjustment is located on the front of the monitor or easily accessible. If not, you'll have to decide if you want to make this adjustment and then find someone qualified to do it.

The XEP80 can actually display up to 256 character columns, but only 80 are available at a time (hmmm, doesn't AtariWriter Plus scroll in 256 columns??!!). The demo program WINDOW.BAS and a joystick illustrates this aspect nicely. Remember, the module has to be plugged into port one and the joystick in two for the program to work. If you want to disable the XEP80 but want to use the printer port, hold down the shift key when booting the system. This disables the 80 column and enables the normal video output; composite video port or RF. The XEP80 handler disables the ANTIC chip from displaying and display I/O is directed to the XEP80. There is a document file on the distribution disk that explains all this in detail.

The distribution disk comes with DOS 2.5, the XEP80 driver, assorted demo programs written in BASIC, a utility program in BASIC that allows you to recreate the AUTORUN.SYS file to reside at a different location in memory, assembly language source code, and a doc file that goes into the hardware and software specifics in detail.

[Editors' Note: Because of a large amount of submissions this month (YEA!) we had to divide this article into two parts. Next month, we will continue this list of pluses and minuses of the XEP80.]

ST Notes

by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

So, you purchased Publishing Partner three months ago and you've done everything imaginable with System, System Bold and Helvetica. The next step was to download some of the public domain fonts on the local BBSes to spice up your documents. Only... wouldn't it be nice if the tail on the Roman y curled just a little more... or the 1 didn't look so much like the 1... or if that one improperly designed character looked as good as all the rest when you print it out?

Font Design Partner (Font Partner), by Interactive Microsystems, allows you to handle any of the situations listed above with ease. Using Font Design Partner you can modify existing fonts or even create your own fonts from scratch! The program automatically creates both printer and screen fonts, and even allows you to create the screen fonts for both monochrome and color systems! If you'd like to know more about this indispensable tool for Publishing Partner, then read on...

Opening up the manual (What! Read the manual first, you say?), the first thing we come across is a chapter on "The (Very) Basics of Typesetting". This chapter explains terms normally used in typesetting when describing fonts. Terms like "em square", "x-height", and "baseline" are defined and accompanying illustrations show the user how the term is used for a normal font. These terms are then applied to Publishing Partner's method of defining a character. This type of background information is invaluable when you start designing your own font. The next thing we find is a tutorial on using the printer font editor and this is where we finally fire up the program! The program is not copy protected, so you can make a backup – *for your own use!* Font Design Partner can be placed in a folder on your hard drive and will work fine.

After moving Font Design Partner over to my hard drive, I double-clicked on FONTPART.PRG and the initial screen flashed up. This is where you discover that Font Design Partner is GEM based...well, sort of. That is, the mouse is fully supported, but you don't get drop down menus, dialog boxes and all the other neat GEM goodies that you are used to. Instead, Interactive Microsystems has chosen to design their own input system and it works very well once you get used to it. The menu is constantly displayed on the right hand side of the screen. To select an option, simply point at it and click, like you normally would, or use the function key that appears next to it.

The biggest problem that I had occurred when performing operations that normally require a double-click (like file selection operations). There is no such thing as a double-click in Font Design Partner. The left mouse button selects the option and the right mouse button confirms it. After 10 minutes of playing, this method becomes very natural and actually can save you from accidentally destroying your work!

Immediately below the menu the current font and character being worked on is displayed, and at the bottom of the screen is the mode indicator (Norm or Full – more on this later) and the cursor coordinates for the drawing window. The left 2/3 of the screen are occupied by the drawing window (the area where all of the editing is done). Point grids are displayed along the top and right sides of the window to aid you in sizing and placement of the character.

Now that you've got an idea of the screen layout, lets get rid of that blank drawing window by loading in an existing font. Selecting the "File Manager" option brings up a new menu that gives us all of the standard file operations, (load, save, rename, delete,

create a folder – even format a disk and display free drive space!) and all from *within* the program. The file manager automatically looks for printer font files (.PFT) if you're in the printer font editor and (of course) screen font files (.FNT) if you're in the screen font editor. To load in one of the fonts displayed on the screen, simply point and click. If you need to change the current directory, just click on the path name at the bottom of the screen and edit it. When you finish with the File Manager, click on Return to go back to the editor.

Returning to the printer font editor, the character M will be displayed in the drawing window. To select any other character, just press the desired key, and the current character defined for that key will be displayed in the window.

Now that we've got a character, we can start to have some fun! Each character is defined by a list of objects. Font Design Partner gives us four types of objects to use when creating characters. These objects include the Goto, Line, Curve, and Close Path. The Goto is a single point object that is always the first object of any character. You could say that it is the starting point of the character. The Goto is also used when jumping to another set of continuous lines, such as when going from the outside of an O to the inside. The Line object simply creates a line between any two points. The Curve object allows you to create very smooth curves. It creates a line between two points, but the line also has two "bender" icons associated with it. By clicking on a bender icon and dragging it, the line can be curved to *any* position imaginable! This feature is fantastic for creating S-shaped curves from one object! The last object, Close Path, is used to seal the path between the final object and the last Goto. If the path is not sealed properly, Publishing Partner might have a problem when printing.

A closer look at the drawing window reveals that there are three dashed lines running through the window. These are called system hash marks. Two of them, the baseline and the x-height, run horizontally and affect every character in the font. The third one runs vertically and sets the width of the current letter. System hash marks are displayed as heavy dashed lines. Font Design Partner gives the user 12 definable hash marks (in addition to the 3 system marks). By clicking on the point ruler you can add up to 6 horizontal and 6 vertical hash marks. These are great for setting predetermined widths and points. You can easily insure that all facets of a

rentertainment

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character are the correct width! The only problem is that I can't save the hash marks. (I just talked to Jeff Crow, the President of Interactive Microsystems, and he said that he might add this feature!) When you've got 10 or 12 marks set and have to leave your computer, it's a little bit of a chore to set them again.

Font Design Partner displays the currently selected line or curve object by drawing a small box around each end. A heavy walled box indicates the start of the line, and a thin walled box indicates the end. To select a different object, just click on Previous Object, or Next Object. When an object is selected, you can modify it by clicking on the desired icon and dragging it to the desired position. Modifying characters has never been easier! Font Design Partner also allows you to insert and delete objects anywhere in the path of the character!

Once you have completed the outline of your new character you will want to use the Set Fill Points option, which allows you set up to 10 fill points per character to insure that Publishing Partner prints your character properly. If you inadvertently place a fill point, just use the Delete Fills option!

Publishing Partner printer fonts actually consist of two fonts, a thick font and a thin font. The thin font is used when printing characters under 10 to 12 points. Both fonts must exist in the font file to make the font usable. The options Edit Thick and Edit Thin allow you to edit either font. If you create your thick font first (and I highly recommend that you do), you can use the Copy Thick command and copy the finished thick character into the thin one! This saves a lot of time, and let's you test the thick font before actually designing the thin one. You can even tell Publishing Partner when to use thick or thin fonts by using the Set Cutoffs option! Clicking on Set Cutoffs will display two numbers. The top number is the lowest point size that will use the thick font, and the bottom number is the smallest point size that bold thin font characters will still be allowed to use the thin font. Once over this setting, the Publishing Partner will use the thick font for this character.

If you've finished creating your M and want to use most of the same objects for your N, just use the Copy From or Copy To options. By selecting Copy From and typing a key, the selected character will be copied to the current character. Copy To simply copies the current character to any other character.
Oh Oh...I really screwed up this character, what now? Selecting Abort Edit will restore the character to it's original form (as long as you haven't saved the font yet). This has saved me more than once!

Now, since I promised to talk about Norm and Full mode, here's the scoop. Publishing Partner expects its basic fonts to be 12 points in size. All scaling is done based on this assumption. In Norm mode, Font Design Partner displays the character in a blown up 12 point by 12 point screen. If you create the character the height of the drawing window, it should be just right. Well, what happens if you need to place benders outside of this window, or if you need to place special symbols (like accent marks for foreign characters) over top of a capitol letter? Selecting Full mode shrinks the window and displays a 26 point by 26 point square, allowing you to accommodate these special cases. While in Full mode, the normal 12 point square is shown with four corner tick marks. Anything drawn outside of the Full mode square *will* be clipped by Publishing Partner!

Immediately below the Norm and Full indicators, there are cursor coordinates which are constantly displayed while moving the mouse in the drawing window. You'll find out how necessary these are when you try to accurately place corners and benders!

Now that we've created our printer font, let's create a matching screen font! Selecting Screen Font (surprise!) places us in the screen font editor. Before creating our font we need to tell Font Design Partner whether we want to create the monochrome or color font. We do this by clicking on the appropriate item at the bottom of the screen. Selecting File Manager allows us to load in an existing font for modification. But what if this font is very different from anything that we already have? Selecting the Auto Font option with the left button will automatically create the current character for you, the right button does the entire font! It won't be perfect, but it does give you a good head start.

As you work on a magnified version of the letter, the actual letter is displayed at the bottom of the edit window. This makes it very easy to see any changes immediately! The screen editor menu includes options for Copy From and Copy To, just like in the printer editor.

When you load a font into Publishing Partner, the font name is displayed in the font selector box. To designate what that name will be, click on the Font: option and type in the new name! Once you've created the color font and saved it, click on the MONO indicator and the font will be converted! Now save the font again, and you can upload your latest masterpiece to your local BBS with both Mono and Color fonts!

Just to prove that I've actually read the manual AND even used all of the options discussed in this review, I've included a sample of a font that I'm working on. It's called Bamboo, and will be coming to a BBS near you soon!

BAMBOO

Overall, this program (and it's documentation) gets a solid A+. I have yet to find any bugs in it, and it does it's job *very* well. At the ridiculously low price of $24.95 (and that's list!) it's a steal! Interactive Microsystems has been very helpful when I've called them.

Minor revisions are provided for the mere cost of postage, and major upgrades will be available at the cost of the value of the enhancements. There is a version in the works for Publishing Partner 2.0 and it will convert old fonts for compatibility with the new version.

Well, that wraps up my review for this month. Font Design Partner v1.1 Interactive Microsystems P.O. Box 1188 Canyon Country, CALIFORNIA 91351 (805)298-7357.

Last Hacks: ST Emulator for 8bit?

By D.F. Neff (MACE)

Last year the Atari community waited while Atari Corporation fought to prevent the release of the 8bit emulator for the ST. This show of resistance may have been just a smokescreen to hide a secret research project from the user groups! If we look back at what was occurring, and read between the lines, all the evidence points to the same conclusion: Atari is developing an ST emulator for the 8-Bit line!

The Clues

First, Atari began selling stock to the public. Jack Tramiel said he was doing this to get money to pay some bills. Now, Jack has lots more money than you or I have and we don't need to sell stock to pay our bills. But, Jack is a nice guy so we didn't ask what he really planned to do with the money.

Second, Atari repeatedly says that they are going to continue to support the 8-Bit machines. I've never heard them say they're going to support the 16-Bit machines though! That sure looks ominous for the 16-bit future.

Third, after a weak fight to prevent the release of the 8-bit emulator, Atari allowed it to be released to a disappointed public. The emulator was a mere shadow of its prerelease image.

Was Atari's resistance to the emulator's release just a smokescreen to divert attention from the expensive research being done on the ST-emulator?

The Motive

When Jack Tramiel bought Atari from Warner, he received thousands of brand new 8-Bit machines, already built, just sitting in warehouses. Now, consider that when Atari sells you an ST, they have to build it, and that cost lots of money. But, if they had an ST emulator on disk, they could just give you an 8-bit machine, with the emulator disk, for the price of an ST. Since they already have the machine, the only cost to Atari is the $0.23 for the disk! The term "Gross Profit" takes on a whole new meaning in this scenario.

Proof

When the 8-bit emulator was demonstrated, Atari quickly pointed out that the 8-bit software was running half-speed, at best, in emulation mode on the ST. It was another smokescreen to prevent us from realizing the obvious: the ST can run only half as fast as an 8-bit!

It's logical that any 16-bit machine will run more slowly than an 8-bit machine. Let me use an analogy of human speech to demonstrate that. If I start throwing 16-letter words at you, our conversation will proceed very slowly while you try to figure out what I'm saying. In fact, you'd probably have to keep referring to a dictionary to figure out the 16-letter words I'm using. Big words just slow things down.

However, if I talk to you in 8-letter words our conversation will take place much faster and end more quickly. Likewise, if I talked to you in 4-letter words, you'd end our conversation very quickly. It's no wonder that 8-bit machines can run faster than a 16-bit ST.

At this point ST owners are probably thinking that the ST files are too long to fit into the normal 8-bit memory. Well, most of room used by an ST file is for the Dictionary. That's right, the ST doesn't understand those 16-bit words and has to look them up in the dictionary. Once you've stripped the dictionary from an ST file, it'll probably fit in an unmodified 400!

A public domain vaporware program called TICA

(Tongue In Cheek Algorithm) translates each 16-bit word into two 8-bit words. All timing loops are lengthened, during the conversion by TICA, since the ST program will be running twice as fast on the 8-bit machine.

ST graphics conversions are a problem. Users of the 8bit machines can choose from a field of graphics screens which range from Graphics 0 to Graphics 32. ST users can choose only High, Medium, or Low (like a cheap clothes dryer). TICA changes all ST graphics to 8bit Graphics 0 so you can see the individual pixels. That eliminates one of the most annoying shortcomings of ST graphics -- all the pictures look like photographs. Who's going to believe you created that picture on your computer if they can't see the pixels?

Conclusion

It all adds up to the same thing -- Atari is coming out with an ST emulator for the 8-bit and stop production of the ST line. Still have doubts? Consider this then: why does Antic, the magazine respected and loved by user groups and SysOps nationwide, publish their ST programs on an 8bit disk?

BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

Next Meeting Jan.14, Voc.Ed.Ctr., 475 E.Roosevelt

Chairman's Column

by Chuck Steele

Last month's Christmas party was held at Josephine Yeager's home. We were able to enjoy her ST and XL set up and running. We called everyone (I hope) to let you know of the location change. I hope we didn't miss anyone with our phone calling. Thanks to Jo for letting us use her home. It was fun seeing the ST version of Wheel of Fortune and making mental comparison to the 8bit version which was last month's DOM. We had a nice disk of games that Tom compiled for us. Thanks Tom.

We really like the new magazine format. It looks great and is easier to read with the larger type. Keep up the good work Bill & Pattie Rayl. We look forward to more interesting articles.

Golly, another Christmas has come and gone, and we are into a new year so HAPPY NEW YEAR fellow ATARIANS. If you have been reading your MAM's closely in the past six month's or so, you may have noticed some writers such as Leo Sell, John Nagy, Jim Steele and others calling for others to pitch in and get involved in *your club.* Club meetings need input and participation from many people. The idea behind all the clubs is that we learn and share with each other. If you just sit at a meeting and don't ask any questions or make any comments then you haven't gained anything and neither has the club. Even worse, if you don't come to meetings, then you can't see the new demos or ask any questions.

In addition, we need new officers to kick off the new year. All positions are open. Chairman, Secretary, Librarian, Treasurer. I hope you will all come to the meetings and be prepared to contribute some of your time.

Do you like your 8bit Atari computer but feel that you aren't getting all the programs and support you would like? Unfortunately Atari has more or less dismissed the 800 XL/XE machines as game machines, with little new software being issued. So where does one go for help? Your local user group can be a big help! Many groups have large libraries of public domain software, and members who are experienced and knowledgeable about hardware and software problems. The local user group is your link to the rest of the Atarians out there who can assist you or you can assist them.

If we stay together as a group then we will have a stronger voice in demanding more support for our machines. If this network of Users disappears, then the life-support system for your computer will be unplugged! It will be up to you alone to keep it running. So I make one final plea for you to come to the meeting and support BCAUG this year.

If you are elected as Chairman, do all you can to see that things are lined up for meetings: that we have a meeting place and time, and that we have an agenda which covers NEWS, OLD Business, NEW Business and DEMOs.

If you are elected as Librarian, then see to it that the Library is kept up. Have the Library at meetings, write articles for the newsletter so people know which new programs have been added to the library. Update the Library by trading with other clubs.

If you are elected as Treasurer, then see that all records are keep up to date and that you know which members have paided up and which have not. Notify members at time of renewal. Give reports at the meetings.

If you are elected as Secretary, then take notes during meetings. Type these notes into meeting minutes and upload to MAM, so they can be published. Be prepared to read notes at meetings if any questions should arise.

I hope you will all be able to make the meeting and be prepared to join in running *your* club. Each of the above jobs shouldn't take more than a few hours each month, but if one person ends up doing several jobs then it takes much much longer!!

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests. Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to: C.H.A.O.S., P.O. Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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Presidential Address

by Leo Sell

Happy New Year!! Hope you had a Merry, Atari Christmas. New Year's is often a time to look at the past and plan for the future. In the past CHAOS has been very strong and active in Atari computer matters, both locally and nationally. But, as I look ahead, I fear that we have weakened considerably and prospects for the future are grim. Much of my pessimism comes from financial worries. Our treasury is down to a dangerously low state. Attendance at 8-bit meetings continues to disappoint. Library sales are slow. In some ways we are dealing with a saturated market, but there are other reasons too.

We still need people to get involved and thereby help promote the club. We remain in need of a Publicity Coordinator and of an 8-bit Disk Librarian. Both jobs are vital to prevent the eventual failure of the club. We also need support from the membership at large, with renewals, donations and purchase of library disks. Remember, you can buy them mail order or rent the library for a very reasonable fee.

There is one other reason for the decline we are experiencing. There is a general lethargy in most Atari User groups now. It is a result of willful negligence on Atari's part to its best market and promoters. Atari is now known for broken promises and phantom expectations. The dealer network they purport to be putting together seems to be nowhere but on the West Coast. And, one week before Christmas, their products are still not advertised much on television in this area. All of this is proof that we have to pull together and take care of ourselves. If you want the most from your Atari, jump in and help. Like many things, the best way to get something out of Atari computing is to put something in it.

Just a quick reminder that the annual club dues will increase in January from the current $12 to $15. Renew by the Jan. meetings and avoid the New Year rush and save money at the same time. What a deal! Remember, you still get the free library disk that goes with the renewal or new membership.

The January 8-Bit Sig will include a discussion/ tutorial session on DOS for the beginner and the expert. Come and learn what Atari never told you... This begins a series of Instructional sessions for all members on a variety of subjects.

ST Library News

by Sally Nagy

Are you ready for a new year to use your ST? New files are coming in all the time and needless to say I am busy organizing them. I am hoping to have a *new updated* catalog with all disks since July so you don't have to keep all those supplement sheets.

For those of you that missed our Christmas Meeting, there was a *new* Audiolite Christmas Disk with pictures and songs. This disk is available as Music #8. Music #9 has LCD or WOW music and color display.

You can choose from eight different songs to play. More Spectra pics on Graphic Display #14 with characters from "Startrek: The Next Generation," Picard, Lt. Data, Worf and Yar ... And another with general pictures. Other Graphic Display disks will have demos of Blacklash, Extensor, Goldrunner, and more! For *1Meg only* users – Juggler, Globe, Dolls and Christmas Demo with more to come...

New Games such as Mine Sweeper, Brickyard, Sensori, and Galactic Ranger. A new *monochrome* disk with Awari, Jeopardy and Elimation and Demos Swan and Juggler... Version 2 of the Eamon Adventures replaces Adventure A1. A new disk with helps and solutions to some of the commercial games. New educational disks for preschool to age 10, Music and drawing programs. Mr. Potato Head, Kid Puzzles, Kid Mixup and more.

Come to the January ST meeting and see 3D. John Johnson promises to bring his Stereo Tek glasses and some new software to use with them. We can even view Spectra Pictures in 3D. See you there.

The CHAOS Download

by John Nagy, SYSOP (517) 371-1106

CHAOS BBS Statistics

We have been operating since June '85 at our current phone number, and have logged 30,000 (yes!) calls since March '85, when we began using what has become the M-5 System BBS software. That averages over 30 calls *every day*, about one every 45 minutes, night and day *for nearly three years*. And you wonder why you occasionally got a busy signal! Seems the phone company should pay *us!* We have about 400 regular users in 35 states and 6 countries.

We offer 300/1200 baud, and about half of our calls are at 1200 baud. We have had a few serious requests for 2400 baud, but we have no current plans (read: funds) to upgrade further. We operate on an Atari 800XL with 256k upgrade, 256k MIO, 10 MEG hard drive, SpartaDos and BASIC XE using M-5 BBS Software. The system equals and surpasses many ST and IBM systems for features and ease of use.

Over 500 files for ST and 8bit Atari machines are online, sorted and described in five sub-indexes. By the time you read this, there should be a powerful sort system allowing preselection by machine, date of upload, etc.

Credits

I want to give special thanks to those who have helped make the CHAOS BBS what it is: John Baker, for several years our BBS librarian, who set a standard of quality in file selection and index description that has been hard to match. Gary Ferris, our current 8bit Librarian, and Joe Kleinschmidt, our current ST Librarian, who are trying to dig out of John's big shadow. Also my sister-in-law Sally Nagy, who helped *a lot* with both ST and 8-bit file support. Barry Schroeder and Mike Clewley, who ran the CHAOS BBS until I took it in '85. Claus Buchholz, who developed the first do-it-yourself memory upgrade even before the 130XE was introduced, and made CHAOS the nationally known main outlet of Upgrade info. Ron Kovaks, whose weekly ZMAGazine is on over 300 BBSes around the country and is a popular feature at CHAOS. And Matthew Singer, whose public domain FOREM BBS program was a good enough beginning to allow me to develop it into what has become the M-5 SYSTEM software. It is now being used at several major club BBSes around the country. Without the outstanding efforts of these and other contributors, the CHAOS BBS would be just another number.

The Future

Due to requests from growing numbers of ST users, the ASCII mode on the CHAOS BBS is now 80 column. The only ASCII users that are likely to be dissapointed are our (very few) Commodore users, as Atari 8bit users should be using ATASCII to get full graphics and 40-column screens. ANSI color graphics support for ST, IBM, Amiga, etc. users is in development. Look for improved Email and *private* file transfer services in the next months, allowing user A to leave a file or program for user B to take then delete, via private mail with file attached for download.

As our club funds are short, any thoughts of going multi-line/multi-user are not feasable at this time, although the M-5 software could handle it. As a result, we are taking steps to see that club members get access and privileges that reflect their contribution to CHAOS. This is difficult at times due to the national profile our BBS has gained. We do not wish to limit our distant users, as we get much needed information and uploads from these users. Please let us know if you have any ideas on this issue. Meanwhile, remember that Tuesday and Wednesday nights, weekdays before 8 p.m. and after 1 a.m. and weekends before 2 p.m. are your *best shot* at finding CHAOS waiting for your call... don't let the busy signal scare you away! Watch for an announcement at the meetings of a special demo/tutorial session for using the CHAOS BBS. You, too, can navigate the system like a pro. Til next time, see ya in chat!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

President's Report
by Jerry Cross

Not much new stuff to report this month. Just a short reminder that the January meeting will have a guest speaker. Mike Clayton, author of the Yemacyb color picture dump program and utilities, will stop by to show some of his latest projects, and demo the Yemacyb program. Try to attend.

The new catalog is finally finished and should be mailed out in the next few weeks. The added time is necessary because they need to be xeroxed a little at a time. The cost to have them printed professionally is a bit high for our tiny club, even with a fat budget! The current catalog will have over 40 pages of Atari 8-bit and ST public domain programs!

Also, in the next few weeks the entire GAG library will be available at the Sy-Draft store, located on Corunna road east of Linden. If you find it inconvenient to attend the meetings, and would like to purchase a GAG disk, just stop by. You must supply your own disk, or purchase them from Sy-Draft. The price per disk is $2.50 for either the 8-bit or ST disks. Non-members can also purchase disks for $5 each. The Michigan Atari Magazine can also be purchased there. Sy-Draft has agreed to give all proceeds back to the club.

We will also be putting together some special disks for sale by Sy-Draft. These will be public domain disks containing the best of the best in our library. This is done by several groups around the country, and has been a huge success. Non-members will also be able to purchase these disks.

On to other stuff, Matt Howe has begun his Basic classes. If you are interested in joining, check with Matt to find out the schedule. The club has received an offer from Antic for special rebates on the purchase or renewal of Antic with the Disk Magazine.

Regulary $79.95, our club will receive $25 back, which we will then refund back to you. Your total cost for the subscription will then be only $54.95! If you have been considering purchasing this magazine, now is a great time to do it. In order for us to take advantage of this deal, we need four orders by February 1. If interested, contact Jerry Cross at 736-4544. That's it for now. Start searching your computer rooms for old software and hardware. February is swap meet time! Meeting dates:

January 13 General meeting
January 23 Workshop
February 10 General meeting (swap meet)
February 27 Workshop

Disk Library
By Ed Kalush

This month is a request for programs. The library is very large, and has most every type of software. What we are lacking is good programs from our group. Trading among groups is a preferred source, but we need our own programs to trade. Dave Petit has been busy converting PS icons to Atari format, but other than that we haven't much to offer. There are still many disks that Jerry collected from all over the world. You will see these in the future. So for the winter months, let's get to the keyboards. You'll receive a free disk for a good program (beat that!).

I have a personal need for a fast character to screen program. It needs to be able to put 4 characters (2 over 2) on the screen and move randomly and smoothly. Specifically needed for my BUNK program for the dice routine. Any help (from anyone) will be appreciated. This program is on disk 146.

As for our library, hope you liked last month's disks... let me know. Want to see something else? Maybe you have one you like... please tell me about it. I'm still behind, w/cruise and holidays, but will have this job under control by 1988 (I hope). There will be something ready for our meeting, so come looking. Until next month...live long and program!

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 in Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College campus. Dues are $20/yr.

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

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Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville, MI 49333
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Meeting News

We had another good turn out at our December meeting (35-40 members). It sure looks good to see so many interested members sharing information.

George reported that the treasury has about $135 (disk sales etc. not in his report) but we have to pay for a renewal of the Analog magazine and the newsletter fee is due for Jan. and Feb. before the next dues are collected. A short discussion about our new dues structure was tabled until the Jan. meeting.

Chris Pelton gave us a fine demonstration of the Atari ST. The Jan. demo will be "text" adventures. There seemed to be a lot of interest in the new additions to our library. Come to a meeting, pay your $3.00 and pick up a catalog.

Steve explained about FLASH! and other BBS things. He also placed in nomination the following: President: George Nosky; V.P.: Marvin Waid and Gery Heitz; Sec.,Lib.: Chuck Baughman. We will take nominations from the floor before voting at the January meeting. George said that about half of the questionnaires have been returned and he will be compiling them soon, so please turn yours in if you haven't already done so.

Discussion about a local Atari fair was tabled until the next meeting. Information about a bargain on paper, and MERIT and how to use it, was distributed to the members present at the meeting. It was also announced that the price of blank disks will be $.50 as long as the supplier doesn't charge us more. We are also looking at the possibility of exchanging info and disks with a person from Poland. This is a brother of one of our members.

GRASS seems to be more exciting and interesting with every meeting. Plan to attend the next meeting and vote. The future of GRASS is being decided at these meetings. We need your input.

M.A.C.E. Journal

From the President

by Don Neff

MACE members who missed the December meeting also missed a good party. We had gifts for every member, lots of cake and cookies, and soft drinks to wash them down. The highlight of the evening was the Midi-Maze battle on eight Atari ST computers. People playing Midi-Maze didn't want to stop long enough to pick up their gifts or eat any goodies! Thanks to the great Atari vendors who support MACE, we gave away thousands of dollars worth of gifts at the meeting. The gifts they donated ranged from Atari Mugs to Modems and great Software!

Most of the people who braved the threatening weather to attend were glad they did because of the fun they had. I want to thank our sister club, Washtenaw Atari Users' Group (WAUG), who helped the MACE ST SIG set up the Midi-Maze game under the guidance of Bruce Urbanski. Mike Olin, Bill and Pattie Rayl and Bob Retelle loaned their STs to MACE for the event.

East side members will be happy to know that MACE East (978-1685) is back up at 300/1200 baud. We will also have a board in the South area about mid-January.

The following is an alphabetical list of the generous supporters who donated gifts to our Christmas party. Please patronize them and mention that you are from MACE: Michtron, Nova Computers, Rentertainment, Sector One, Soft House, Software Trends, Sy Draft, United Computer, Voice BBS (532-8410).

General Membership Meeting 12/ 15/ 87

The December "Christmas Party" meeting of MACE was held at the Southfield Civic Center. President Don Neff called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Don complimented the publishers of Michigan Atari Magazine and noted there were not many articles submitted by MACE members.

Some members asked how articles should be submitted, and Don said they can be uploaded to MACE WeST (582-0657) or Molin's Den (420-0407) or The Treasure CheST (973-9137). Hardcopy and disk-based articles may be submitted to Pattie Snyder-Rayl (MACE Journal Editor) or to any officer.

Don announced MACE East BBS (AMIS) will be back online starting January 1. Member Mike Lechkun will operate the system in Warren, using the number MACE East used to run on several years ago -- 978-1685. Don said, starting in January, there will be a MACE South BBS operating on an ST (FoReM software) run by Ed Hanson, chair of the MACE ST SIG. The number for this BBS will be 675-4660. Don also announced special thanks to United Computer for the loan of the Avatex 2400 modem used on MACE WeST BBS.

Several members of the ST SIG and some members of

WAUG brought their ST hardware to set up a MIDI ring so members could play MIDI-MAZE. Many players became so engrossed in the game they did not even hear their names being called in the prize drawings! The next general membership meeting will be held Tuesday, Jan. 19 at 7:30.

Michael Olin
MACE Rec. Sec'y

1988 MACE MEETING DATES

Officer Meeting	General Meeting
Jan. 8	Jan. 19
Feb. 5	Feb. 16
March 4	March 15
April 8	April 19
May 6	May 17
June 10	June 21

All General meetings are held in room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10 1/2 Mile Rd and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30.

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

Next Meeting

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

January9, 1987 February 13, 1987

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Steve Volker	ST Disk Lib.	793-2955
George Stuart	News Letter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You an get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8- bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Letter from the Prez

A new year has arrived, and along with it a brand new look for the Michigan Atari Magazine! I would like to extend a sincere thank you to Patüe Rayl on behalf of TAG for showing up at our meeting (even though she *knew* that we were hiding in the bushes with our eyes peeking out). The first issue (December) looked great, and every comment I heard was positive! Although the first newsletter didn't make it to our mailboxes on time, Pattie brought several sample issues. Just the fact that she took the time to visit us and get our comments gave us a good feeling. Keep up the good work Pattie (and Bill)!

Hot Flashes from the Future!

by George Stuart

It's the start of a new year, and a new chance to get organized, so in January we'll be demoing databases to help you get your stuff together. On the ST LeRoy will be demoing DB Master One, and he'll go through the basic construction of an application (this application is to be determined by *you,* so think hard before coming to the meeting).

Let's see I've tried Data Perfect, Data Manager, Synfile+ and Analog DataBase. I didn't like any of them because they seem too restrictive. All of them require predefined fields and records of a certain size. This may be fine for some, but some times I have more information to enter than anticipated. What I would really like is a database that is a cross between a word processor and a database. I didn't get one but I will demo a PD database called DataBase II. This program is written in Basic with some machine language subroutines. Hmm...I don't have the instructions so maybe if I list it to the printer?

Relics to Relish

The swap meeting, simply put, didn't happen. Too many people either didn't know about it or forgot, and there was very little to swap (or buy or sell or...). So the nicely laid out meeting agenda that was published last month was left on the wayside...Oh well.

Instead we just had a general Q&A and Bull session. Good buys on printers (like the Panasonic 1080i and 1091i, Model II from Computability) were discussed, along with other juicy tidbits. One of the big questions was "What has happened to Analog/ST Log? Are they still in business?" The answer is yes, they are still in business. Analog just posted a lengthy logon message on Delphi stating that they are still publishing (although rather late due to a new publisher), and that any missed issues would be added to your current subscription.

LeRoy mentioned that the new version of PC-Ditto is now shipping. Monochrome is now supported, along with hard drives and the mouse! Much discussion was held concerning the club losses on raffles. After much debating (and kicking, screaming and biting) it was decided to continue our raffles as we always have.

At the end of the meeting, our new ST disk librarian, Steve Volker, was kept busy making disks. Steve has done a *super* job in organizing our disks already, and I hope he continues with the enthusiasm he has shown so far!! At the next meeting, we will try to have copies of our library list available for members.

Expiration Notice

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive *no* more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

8-bit Equipment Volunteers

Gerry Reno	Monitor
Nelson Greene	Disk Drive
Club Equipment	800XL

ST Equipment Volunteers

Bryant LeFreniere	Monitor
Paul Bork	520ST & Disk Drive

Once again, a big *thanks* to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. *please,* if you're going to be late, or can't make it, *call!!* It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

From The Prez...

In the 5+ years that I have now been playing and working with Atari computers, I cannot think of any one word that encompasses more subject matter than *telecommunications.* I vividly remember the day I came home with my first modem, and can't recall ever feeling more nervous about any other peripheral device I had previously acquired for my hobby. Printers were just machines that left ink on paper, and light pens were glorified joysticks. But a *modem!* What could possibly be more mysterious that this one device? (And what did all those terms like Baud, Duplex, Parity and CARRIER mean?)

Nervousness fell to impatience, so I dove in head first. All stores at that time were willing to sell me a modem, but none had a system set up to show how to use one and I was not so fortunate to know anyone who had previously used modems. I was reduced to reading manuals in order to make it work, which is not the most advisable approach – one look at the Atari 850 Manual is enough to scare the bejeebers out of any novice! I muddled through, somehow, got the thing to dial a number the salesman had given me and found myself staring as my cursor moved in rows across my monitor "painting" what I would later know as the Baudville Welcome Screen.

Those of you who wish to take an easier route will be glad to know there is a simpler alternative: attend the Jan. 12 meeting of WAUG! where we will demonstrate the popular terminal programs for the ST and 8bit Atari computers. If all goes well, there will also be discussion of the Merit Computer Network (the state-wide communications system which links Michigan's major universities) and "pay-as-you-go" services such as CompuServe, GEnie and PC Pursuit.

It won't take you long to discover the only difficult thing about *telecommunications* is spelling it. There's a whole new world of wonderful things awaiting you and your computer "out there," and you won't likely ever regret getting started. See you on the 12th! Click.... NO CARRIER

Michael Olin
WAUG! President

General Meeting 12/8/87

This was our Christmas Party! ... therefore nothing useful was done, but we had a lot of fun. The majority of the meeting consisted of many games of Midi-Maze, with a constantly changing set of players. We had six ST's connected up to one another for this, and all I remember of it was that I got blasted far more often than I blasted anyone else. For the 8bit world, we had Flight Simulator running, but I don't recall anyone performing a successful landing!

However, two lucky members got to walk out of the meeting as proud new owners of the above two programs. The raffle that resulted in this was not without its own excitement: The winner of Midi-Maze was the person drawing names out of the bag! Then the first two names pulled for Flight Simulator were WAUG! officers who gave up their claims so the game could go to a non-officer (all in the spirit of the season, we presume). Also, two disk notchers and two 3.5 inch disk cases were given away. Next month's topic: Telecommunications, January 14!

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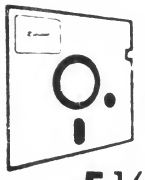

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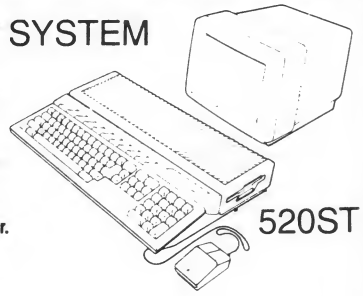

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MEMBERSHIP: Membership in M.A.C.E. cost $20 for 12 months, or $35 for 24 months (make checks payable to M.A.C.E.). This membership includes all family members living at your address.

MEETINGS: Regular monthly meetings are held at 7:30pm, on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. We meet in room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center, Evergreen and 10 1/2 mile road, Southfield, michigan. Typical meeting programs consist of XL/XE and ST demos, tutorials and interesting group discussions on any Atari subject.

DISK LIBRARIES: Our ST library contains more than 170 disks and is growing rapidly.

We have one of the largest XL/XE disk libraries in the world (over 500 disks!) which includes one of the largest collections of Print Shop icons (17 disks) and utilities. A complete catalog of this library is available on disk for $2.

Our disks sell for $5.00 each and may be purchased at any meeting or ordered through the mail. You must be a MACE member to purchase disks from us, we do not sell to nonmembers.

MACE JOURNAL: Our club magazine, "THE MACE JOURNAL", is one of the most widely read and quoted Atari related publications available. In fact, we are proud to be one of the clubs selected by Unicorn Publications for inclusion in their fine magazine, "MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE". By special arrangement with Unicorn, our members now receive a free subscription ($18 value) to this magazine with their $20 MACE membership! Each month the magazine features informative Atari articles, interviews, reviews, happenings, news items, hardware and software tips, as well as club news from 9 Michigan Atari user groups.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: We operate 3 BBS's for general public use. Our main board, MACE West (582-0657, ASCII only), operates at 300/1200/2400 baud and supports both 8-bit and 16-bit users. MACE East (978-1685) operates at 300/1200 baud and supports mainly 8-bit users, although 16-bit users are welcomed too. Our south board (625-4660, ASCII only) operates at 300/1200 baud and supports both 8-bit and 16-bit users. All of the MACE boards have message bases which are open to public use and viewing.

COMPUTER HELP: MACE has many members who are experts in Atari computers and programs. No matter what type of Atari related questions you have, we probably have several members who can answer them at our meetings.

If you are a new user who just entered the world of computers, we can help you get started and guide you as you progess. If enough new users are interested, we will sponsor classes to teach you how to use your Atari comfortably.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG): Ocassionally a group of members gather together to share knowledge and experiences in a common interest. These special interest groups form to learn more about topics such as: Telecommunications, Programming Languages, Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Music, etc. MACE will form a SIG for almost any Atari computer subject, if enough members express an interest in supporting the subject.

GROUP PURCHASES: Manufacturers of Atari related items often offer discounts to MACE for large quantity group purchases. These discounts are passed on to our members who take part in these group purchases. Items we have saved money on as a group include: 2400 Baud Modems, Disk drives, Magazine subscriptions, etc.

You must be a MACE member to take part in our group purchases, however, the discount on some items saves you more than your membership costs!

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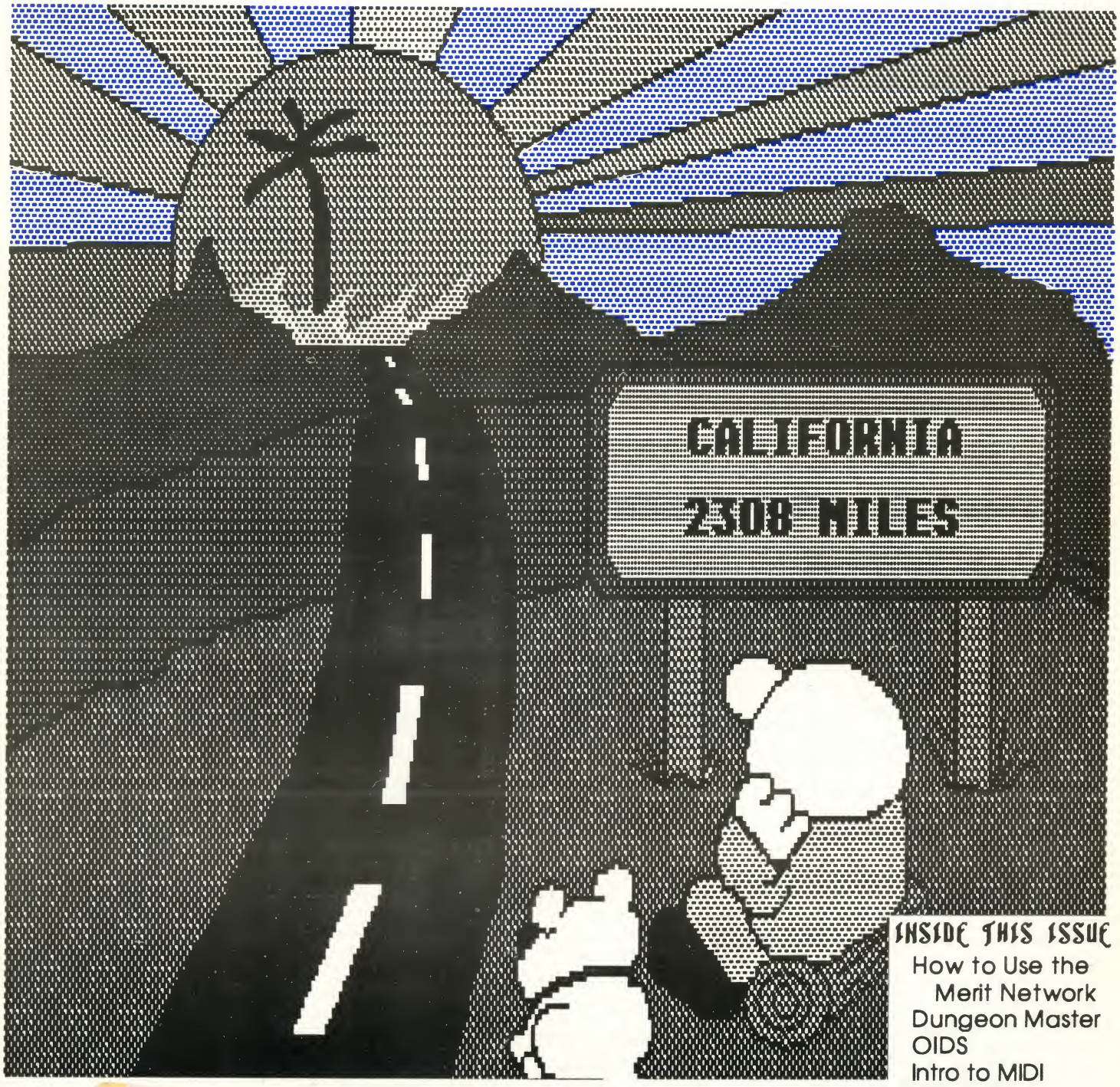

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

How to Use the Merit Network
Dungeon Master
OIDS
Intro to MIDI
Graphics Transformer
XEP-80 Review
and MORE...

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Our next MACE meeting will be on MARCH 22, instead of March 15 as scheduled

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MAM this Month

Vol. 3, No. 2
February 1988

Features

From the Editors' Desks	1
Letters to the Editors	2
Atari News and Comment	3
How to Use the Merit Network, II	5
Graphics Transformer (8bit)	9
An Introduction to MIDI	10
ST Notes (ST)	13
Two Winners from FTL--Dungeon Master and OIDS (ST)	14
Living with the XEP80, Pt. 2 (8bit)	16
Bits of Basic (8bit)	21
Silicon Spelunking (ST)	21
New 8bit PD Software (8bit)	23
Modem Speaker Correction	23
600XL Monitor Outputs (8bit)	24
Disktool Modifications (8bit)	26
Last Hacks	40

Club News and Minutes

BCAUG	(Battle Creek, MI)	28
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	29
GAG	(Flint, MI)	32
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	33
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	34
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	35
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	36
TAG	(Saginaw/ Tri-Cities)	37
WAUGI	(Ann Arbor, MI)	39

Advertisers

Migraph	4
Mars Merchandising	5
Proco Products	5
State Street Computer	9
Rentertainment	12
Supra Corp.	18
Basic Bits and Bytes	19
Soft House	20
United Computer	25
Terrific Corp.	28
Schubert Corporation	Inside Front Cover
Computer Emporium	Inside Back Cover
Rite Way	Back Cover

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From the Editors' Desks

Bill and Pattie Rayl, Mike Olin

Well, looks like another month is down...where does all the time go? It's been a very good month for MAM and February brings the addition of the GLASS user group to our list of participating clubs. GLASS is an ST-only group from Troy, MI. They were one of the club that co-sponsored the August '87 Detroit Atari MAGIG Show. We welcome them and look forward to their input.

We have also been in contact with the CACE user group of Jackson. As many of you know, CACE was once a participating group, but decided to go it on their own. We are happy to report that they are still very much alive and we may be seeing articles from them in the next month or so!

On a sour note, it seems BCAUG of Battle Creek is having serious difficulties and their club may fold. See Chuck Steele's "President's Address" in the club section for more details.

MAM has received a number of software packages for review, and in this month's issue, GKAUG has reviewed the first program -- Graphics Transformer from Alpha Systems. Other products on the list for the next couple months include Basic Turbocharger, also from Alpha Systems (8bit); The Editor, Video Meister and Super Label II from Irata Verlag (8bit); and Gone Fish'n by Interstel (ST). Each of these packages, once reviewed, will be donated to the club doing the review. If you weren't one of the clubs to get chosen this round, don't worry. Once a club has been chosen, they are eliminated from the drawing (the only fair way we could think of doing it. Now, where's that hat?!) until *all* the clubs have received *something* for review.

We have changed our cover format; let us know what you think. We also plan to run either full-page artwork or photos each month. This month's cover art was created by Bob Retelle and is titled "California Dreamin'."

If you have any original artwork (computer or otherwise), photographs or even just an idea that would make a 'truely awesome' cover, we'd like to hear from you. Non-computer art should be B/W pen sketches (do not send originals as they could be damaged in the mail!). Photos should be B/W on matte, accompanied by a copy of the negative if possible. Computer art in Degas, NeoChrome, TINY or Koala format preferred. High resolution digitized pictures also welcome. Ideas can come in any format. We can always convert them!

Letters to the Editor

Compliments, Criticisms, and Caveats

First off, let me congratulate you both on an excellent start. With the addition of MACE, MAM is ever closer to a statewide publication.

There is much to like about your new rendition of MAM: 1. It is beginning to look polished. 2. The use of the Laser fonts give the page a clean and finished look. 3. The table of contents and list of advertisers is a nice touch. 4. I appreciate your use of less graphic fillers in the January issue. 5. The content is mixed between ST, General interest, and 8-bit.

Of course, you can't please everyone, and I do have some concerns and criticism, hopefully constructive:

1. The cover, cover stock, and size of the pages, are too much a clone of Current Notes. The appearance, to those familiar with both magazines, is so similar as to make it seem that MAM has no identity of its own. I'm not sure if you need different cover stock, graphics or a different size, but nothing really distinguishes it from other newsletters. If I stick MAM into a stack of exchange newsletters, I have a hard time picking it back out easily.

2. The print format is occasionally inconsistent. While I see valid reasons to change to a smaller font for listings and such, I think you should insist that articles conform to a standard format. A particular example of what I am talking about is page 19 of the Jan. issue. My opinion is that this article could have conformed to your format without compromising its mission. Keeping the format as consistent as possible helps to give a professional look to the magazine.

3. More general interest articles are needed, which really means that writers such as me have to get off our duffs and write!!!!

4. My biggest peeve with the new MAM is the placing of all club information at the back of the magazine. It is now possible, and common I suspect, for people to easily page by those pages. Despite being President of CHAOS, I have a tendency to close the magazine when I reach the club section. I think it is important to remember that MAM is primarily a *user group* publication. It would be in the interest of the magazine and the groups to mix the club information in with the rest of the magazine so that the information would be read by a wider audience.

Finally a caveat or two:

1. Be careful of your balance and mix. Generally you are doing well in this area. Remember it is important not to appear to give more emphasis to one club, machine, or view than another. Some things you must be careful to balance: ST coverage, 8bit coverage, club by club, technical, novice, and so on.

2. I also urge you to do all that you can to keep a polished and professional look (those arrows for continued have got to go).

Once again, let me make it clear that I think you have a great start. Thanks for all your hard work and effort. We look forward to a long and fruitful association.

Cordially, Leo Sell, CHAOS

P.S. You might try to persuade *all* the clubs to include phone and address info... some of them do *nothing* like it, and how do they expect to get any contacts from outside?

[Editors' Note: Thanks for all the comments and even the criticism...it is this kind of feedback that will help us produce a better magazine. There's a lot of ground to cover in answer to this letter, so let's get started.

We agree with some of your concerns:

1) The cover needs to contain either artwork or photos and much less white-space than the Jan. cover. You will see changes in the cover as we experiment a little, as you have probably noticed with this issue.

2) General interest articles are always going to be needed, and we feel we are doing the best we can to supply a well-balanced magazine. Unfortunately, as you point out, it is hard to please everyone and what is interesting to an 8bit owner may be skipped over by an ST owner and vice versa. We welcome any and all new-user oriented articles and tutorials. Anyone who looks at the home-computer market realizes that the majority of people who now own computers are *users*. They don't care what's inside the machine or how to make it do something neat – they want to run a wordprocessor, spreadsheet, database or whatever. Unfortunately, not many people have expressed interest in *writing* helpful articles for the 8bit users. We have approached a couple individuals to do an intro to SpartaDos and a Beginner's Basic tutorial, but nothing has come of it yet. We'll keep after them, though.

3) We agree that the format should be consistent– to a point. The article you refer to is "Flying the ST" by Allan P. Bargen, a Canadian member of MACE. His article is a special case in that the title is under his own copyright and MAM has been given permission to use it with certain provisions. We would much rather see Mr. Bargen's article in the magazine in the 3-column format than not see it at all.

As for your concerns about MAM having no identity of its own, we disagree. The size of the pages and cover stock have little to do with identity. We did not choose the glossy cover and 8-1/2 x 11 format because Current Notes does it (though considering they are the most popular magazine of its kind, it might have been a good reason to do it). We feel, as do many advertisers and stores, that the new format says *"magazine"* and the old format of MAM says *"newsletter."* This also applies to your "biggest peeve" about separating user groups from the features/articles.

We have taken the magazine out of the hands of any individual user group's control and given it a new identity. It is no longer just a cooperative *newsletter*..it is a full-fledged *magazine* that also serves as the official newsletter for the majority of Michigan Atari user groups.

At the same time, we are also serving the general Atari community, with non-club member subscribers and store sales. People who are not members of clubs buy/read the magazine for the articles and will eventually at least *look* at the club info. Then, maybe they'll be real smart and figure out that they can get the magazine cheaper by joining a club (plus get lots more benefits too!).

The format, as it stands now, has a much more broader appeal than chopping up all the articles with club minutes. On the other hand, people interested in what the clubs around the state are doing need not hunt to find what they want. So, unless we get mobbed with complaints about this, we will not revert back to the old format of splitting the user group information up and inserting it between the features.

With all this said, please remember that we are in the development stages and are just now starting the magazine down the path to where we want it to be. We have set specific goals for the publication and a timeframe in which to accomplish them. With a little time, a lot of effort and planning and (of course) the funds, the magazine will continue to grow and develop with no cost increases to the participating groups.]

Credit where Credit is Due

I received a long distance phone call from Dave Arlington who was the original author of the review on 221 B Baker Street which appeared in the December issue of MAM. He said that he was very happy to see the article again in print, however, we had made one slight error. This article originally appeared in their West New York Atari Users Group Newsletter known as Pokey. He seemed surprised that we had given credit to the Roughwriter since they do not directly exchange newsletters with them. I told him that I would pass this information on to you in order to get the right newsletter credited. Maybe you could include a note concerning the above. Thanks!

Rich Barnes, CHAOS

[Editors' Note: Thanks for passing this along, Rich. And sorry, Dave, for not doing a little more "detective work" as to the actual source of your review. The article was submitted to us by a MACE member who thought it worth reprinting. Perhaps it appeared in the Roughwriter without giving proper credit. Regardless of where it was from, it was an enjoyable review, and we're glad the true source has now been revealed!]

Atari News and Comment

Editorial by JOHN NAGY

Atari Stockwatch

After more stockmarket sleigh rides, Atari stock is still hanging near the $6-$7 mark. Splashy press at the winter COMDEX show and word of the ABAQ future-computer seem to be holding up the company reputation, and therefore the stock values.

"Big splash" advertising never made it to much of the country, despite millions supposedly spent by Atari to hawk the 8bit and ST computer lines this winter. According to Neil Harris, top information man at Atari, the advertising was limited to regions where dealer penetration of the products was sufficient. Meaning if Atari is hard to find in your area, they didn't advertise there. It seems to make economic sense, but as long as Atari only advertises where people already can buy the machines, the areas where they *can't* be found will *never* hear of Atari again. Let's hope Atari will do something to break the circle of "no dealer, so no advertising, so no demand, so no dealer...."

Meanwhile, you probably noticed all the Mega ST machines available all over... No? It's because they are all in Europe. Atari makes them only in Taiwan, and can sell →

Make the News

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Continued on page 4

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all they build for more money keeping them in Europe than by importing them into the U.S. About 15-20 percent of the production of ALL the ST machines makes it to our shores, in order to have SOME domestic presence. Look for this to change if and when Atari builds a new manufactuing plant in Nevada (probably) in mid '88...or maybe by Christmas?

Atari has also closed its traveling circus, for the most part. Although Atari shows already committed to will be held, it is unlikely more will be added. You can't really blame Atari for wanting out of the cumbersome fest schedule, with all the constant problems and complaints from the user groups, but they were mightly cheap advertising and could have been better public relations if handled with more user group communication.

Games Companies Play

The Atari 2600, the world's largest selling computer of all time, (it's a computer inside, isn't it?) is ready to be redesigned again... New technology allows the entire game machine to be integrated into *one chip*. Meanwhile, thousands of *counterfeit* 2600s were seized off the Florida coast recently, destined for dealers who may or may not have known they were fakes. Made in Taiwan to look like the Atari units, they could seriously cut into profits for the real company. Fortunately, they were discovered and action is being taken to prevent a recurrance.

The Anatomy of an Atari Magazine

Wondering where your Analog or ST Log magazines have gone? ST Log has been out of circulation since the September, 1987 issue, and Analog followed one month later. Official reports from Analog say the company was purchased by a large publishing house, and publication resumes starting with a March '88 issue. Analog has released the name of the new publisher -- Larry Flynt Publications (producers of Hustler Magazine). The company will leave it's present New England quarters for the West Coast. It is also questionable whether separate 8bit and ST magazine publication will be continued. Subscribers are encouraged to hang on, they will get their full contracted number of issues.

Parker Brothers is a bit peeved at the plethora of Monopoly computer games floating around as public-domain versions of its profitable, copyrighted property. Parker Brothers reminds us this is a copyright infringement as the Monopoly game, including the board graphics, instructions, playing cards, Title deed cards, and other distinctive elements of the game are fully protected under the Federal Copyright Act and the Federal Trademark Act, not to mention state copyright laws. The only licensed home computer software developers are Sega and Virgin Games. Other than these two licensees, none of the software versions of the Monopoly game out now have been authorized by Parker Brothers.

A last item this month... a bizzare report has been traveling from user group newsletter to newsletter. It

follows up on the cart-based 8bit emulator for the ST, and talks about a cart to run ST software on an 8bit machine. Then it goes on to discuss how it can run CP/M and IBM software too, even a version for the 800 to run XE software, and support an ST disk drive... all for $99. *This story is supposed to be humorous.*

The original vesrsion I saw about a year ago went on, getting more ridiculous with each paragraph, until some sort of April Fools punchline closed the item. Now, without the last paragraphs, the article is being reprinted in various newsletters as though it were real, with hopeful postscripts! No, these products *do not* exist. Pass the word. And that's all the words for this month.

How to Use the Merit Network, Part II

by John Perry, Jr.
Atari specific info added by Bill Rayl

Editors' Note: We continue the last half of an article we started in January's magazine explaining how to use the free Merit network to call boards in Ann Arbor.

Uploading and Downloading

So far all you can do is read and leave messages, or view ASCII files. That is because you are using only 7 data bits, or just the text part of the ASCII table. You cannot upload and download programs and utilities while you are only using 7 data bits.

So, you have to reset the dial out modem (and your own system, possibly) to 8 data bits and no parity if you want to upload or download programs using Xmodem or other transfer protocols. (Note: You should be able to use Kermit to transfer non-text files through the Merit system. Standard Kermit can transfer non-text files using only 7 data bits. However, you will probably find that this won't work. On almost all BBS systems, Kermit is implemented using 8 data bits, if Kermit is available at all.

Fortunately it is pretty easy to reset the dial-out modem to 8 data bits. The dial-out modem can only be properly reset AFTER you have connected to the BBS which you will be uploading or downloading from. You also need to know how to send a <break> from your terminal program (there are a number of terminal programs capable of sending a <break> such as Flash!, ST Talk or ST-Term for the ST; Chameleon or Compuserve's terminal package for the 8bit Atari line). On an ST using Flash!, the <break> is generated by Shift-Clr Home.

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For 8bit owners using a terminal program with source code, it should be fairly easy to add a modem break. Page 55 of the 850 manual describes a modem break as a space that is longer than a normal space, a pause during which nothing is sent. On an 8bit Atari, this can be accomplished by doing an

xio 34,#@modemchan,2,0,"r"

followed by a 500ns (1/2 second) pause, and then an

xio 34,#@modemchan,3,0,"r".

Make sure the modem channel is closed while doing this and reopen the channel when you are done. It took me quite a while to get this bit of information and Mike Olin (Molin's Den) has now implemented this with Amodem 7.5. It works!

For the ST owners who have access to their source code, a modem break is a fairly simple thing to add. You simply call Rsconf(-1,-1,-1,-1,3,-1), followed by a pause that is longer than the time it takes to send one character, followed by Rsconf(-1,-1,-1,-1,1,-1). Setting the TSR (transmitter status register) to 3 sends a break condition and resetting it to 1 re-enables transmission. That's all there is to it!

To change to 8 data bits, you can enter the following commands at any time after you have connected to the BBS using the Merit dial-out modem:

<break>%binary=on<return>
<break>%remote binary=on<return

At that point, you can do a

<break>%?<return>

to see if the parameters have been correctly set. If they aren't, simply set the one(s) in error and check again. If you receive some garbage characters or a "!" after hitting the <break>, it may be necessary to hit a backspace or two to clear that up. Also, you may want to experiment with sending %remote binary=on just before attempting to upload a file...most people have had more success doing it then as opposed to just after logging on. Stubborness is the key here. If you don't get it the first time – try, try again.

One other helpful break command is <break> %reader=off. This command stops Merit from buffering text until a packet is full. If you are having problems with overflowing Merit's buffer when reading messages or typing, set this command.

With these settings done correctly, you should be able to download or upload programs as if you were calling a bulletin board in your own local area. Though most Atari users who have followed these steps have been able to download using Xmodem with no problem, uploading seems to work only intermittently. [Sometimes, by following these steps, 8bit callers can logon to Molin's Den in ATASCII, even!]

Helpful Hints

1. Merit is a little bit slower than calling the local bulletin boards. A file that would take 30 minutes to download from a local bulletin board will take about 45 minutes to download through Merit. So anything that you download through Merit should be uploaded to a local board, if anyone else in your area might like to use it. Not only will this speed things up for everybody in your area, but it might help to keep several people in the same town from downloading the same program through Merit. This will keep the Merit lines open for all of us.

2. Because Merit works much slower than a direct phone line, you will sometimes get "Timeout" errors when you transfer programs through Merit. Many terminal programs offer a "Relaxed Xmodem" protocol (or Compuserve Xmodem) which is not so particular about when it receives data. Relaxed Xmodem protocol will often eliminate the "Timeout" errors you receive through Merit.

3. *Do* upload stuff to Ann Arbor area boards, if you find programs in your hometown that are good, but not available in Ann Arbor yet. This will make the sysops happy. It will also give a lot of people access to the programs you like to use. Everyone in Michigan can call the Ann Arbor area for free.

4. *Do* tell other people how to use Merit. If the system becomes popular enough, the Merit people might install other "dial out" modems in other parts of the state. Eventually, every BBSer in every part of the state might be able to call boards in every other part of the state. This can only benefit everybody.

It is in the hope of expanding the Merit dial out modem services that I wrote this manual. [ED: There is talk from Merit about adding a dial-out modem to the Lansing area if there is enough interest. Just think of having the CHAOS BBS as a local call from most of the state! Contact Merit at the address or phone below and help us all get access to Lansing.]

5. PLEASE keep in mind that Merit was *not* created to allow a few BBSers to bypass the telephone company long-distance rates. We can use it for that as long as we don't interrupt the normal function of the Merit system too much. Merit was built to allow educators and university researchers in Michigan to contact one another via computer.

The dial-out modem in Ann Arbor was given to Merit as a gift, and they installed it as an extra feature, and probably as an experiment. (It isn't mentioned in any of the Merit publications that I've seen, nor in any of their newsletters.) Please limit the amount of time that you spend calling BBSes through Merit. It is entirely possible that if BBSers start to interfere in the real purpose of the Merit system, that the dial-out modem will be removed from the system.

Most professionals using Merit use it during the daytime. If you limit your calling times between the hours of 8:00 am and 6:00 pm, and make most of your calls outside of these times, you'll be doing your part in using Merit responsibly.

6. Even if you are a 300 baud user, you can use the DO1200 line. (And 1200 baud users can use the DO300 line, if they don't mind communicating at 300 baud. This can be handy if the DO1200 line is busy.) If you are a 300 baud user, you will have problems with reading messages sent through the DO1200 line. Data will be coming to you at 1200 baud, but your modem will only be able to receive it at 300 baud. About 25% of text will be lost to you. However, you can call a BBS with the 1200 baud line.

Michigan Merit Numbers

	300 bps	1200 bps	2400 bps
Ann Arbor:			
Autonet	663-7618	663-7618	761-8344
Merit	763-4800	763-6500	764-4800(V)
Merit		763-6520(B)	
Telenet	996-5995	996-5995	665-2900
Battle Creek:			
Autonet	963-9269	963-9269	
Telenet	968-0929	968-0929	
Birmingham:			
Merit	258-6811	258-6811	
Cadillac:			
Merit	775-3760	775-3760(B)	
Cheboygan:			
Merit	627-2214	627-2214(B)	
or	627-2220	627-2220(B)	
Dearborn:			
Merit	593-5059	593-5484(B)	
Detroit:			
Autonet	271-9100	271-9100	
Merit	577-0335	577-0335	
Telenet	964-2988	964-2988	963-2274
East Lansing:			
Merit	353-3500	353-3500	353-3500(B)
		353-4854(V)	
Flint:			
Autonet	767-4505	767-4505	
Merit	762-3311	762-3311	
Telenet	235-8517	235-8517	
Autonet	957-0291	957-0291	
Merit	774-9521	774-9521(B)	
Telenet	774-0966	774-0966	
Holland:			
Autonet	399-0734	399-0734	
Houghton:			
Merit	487-1519	487-1519(B)	
Jackson:			
Autonet	750-4031	750-4031	
Telenet	782-8111	782-8111	
Kalamazoo:			
Autonet	381-1890	381-1890	
Merit	383-1360	383-1360(B)	
Telenet	345-3088	345-3088	
Lansing:			
Autonet	694-3236	694-3236	
Telenet	484-0062	484-0062	
Manistee:			
Merit	464-5542	464-5542(B)	
Marquette:			
Merit	225-0222	225-0222(B)	
Midland:			
Tymnet	695-6751	695-6751	
Muskegon:			
Autonet	722-7782	722-7782	
Petoskey:			
Merit	347-8881	347-8881(B)	
Port Huron:			
Tymnet	982-0301	982-0301	
Rochester:			
Merit	370-4310	370-4311	
Saginaw:			
Autonet	790-1141	790-1141	
Telenet	790-5166	790-5166	
Southfield:			
Autonet	827-7300	827-7300	
Merit	827-7600	827-7600	
Telenet	827-4710	827-4710	
Southgate:			
Merit	283-8822	283-8822	
St. Joseph:			
Autonet	428-2741	428-2741	
Sterling Heights:			
Merit	939-3370	939-3370	
Traverse City:			
Merit	941-9826	941-9826(B)	
Telenet	946-2121	946-2121	
Warren:			
Telenet	575-9152	575-9152	

(V) = Vadic 3400 (B) = Bell 212A

NOTE: If you are dialing into Merit from Cadillac, Manistee, Petoskey, or Traverse City, you should be aware that there is a $2.00/connect-hour surcharge for use of these numbers. This surcharge will be deducted automatically from the host account being accessed. These numbers also provide autospeed service. For more information on access via these numbers, please contact the Merit Central Office at (313) 764-9423.

Ann Arbor Area BBSes Accessible via Merit

The OutpoST 449-8544 BBS Express ST (Atari, Mac, IBM, Commodore) Formerly Country Peddlar

Molin's Den 420-0407 MortAmis (Atari 8bit)

Clear Thinking	761-2444	BB/ST (Atari/All)
Treasure CheST	973-9137	BB/ST (Atari ST/8bit)
Official BBS of the Michigan Atari Magazine		
Late Nite BBS	459-6930	Michtron's (ST,Amiga)
Run by Canton Computer--call after 7:30!		
Neon Brain	747-6260	Plexus ST (ST/All)
Run by Brian Hall, author of 8bit and ST Plexus		
State St. Comp.	663-0090	BBS Express ST (All)
Run by State Street Computer. Call after 8p.m.		
STorebase	595-3172	Michtron's (Atari, etc.)
Run by Basic bits and Bytes		
Starship Excelsior	662-6609	??? (ST, Amiga, Mac)
Death Trap	420-4483	C-Net (C-64)
Lyons Den	437-9486	C-Net (C-64)
Great Lakes #1	453-2221	Wildcat (IBM PC)
Mouse Trap	453-5146	
PC Cnty Morgue	453-5603	
Crash Landing	455-0339	Wildcat (IBM)
Tandy Harbor	455-3977	(IBM)
Metroplex	455-4227	PicoSpan (Conference)
Good News	459-8375	TBBS (Religion)
Dark Castle	459-8449	
Dog House	482-6567	C-Net (C-64)
Flip Side	484-1865	C-Net (C-64)
Wash. Remote	484-3065	
Pogo Net	484-3752	
Ypsi Tucky BBS	487-1911	Wildcat (IBM)
WIPCUS	663-1835	RBBS (IBM)
Top Gun	761-1603	C-Net (C-64)
Future World	981-6150	C-Net (C-64, Amiga)
Net Meg	994-3865	FIDO (IBM, Mac, DEC)
Hersey Micro	994-3946	RBBS Fansi-CON(IBM)
M-Net	994-6333	PicoSpan
(*giant* UNIX-based message BBS)		
A-Net	996-4644	PicoSpan (Conference)
Requires small membership fee.		
Tech Net	996-4620	Wildcat (IBM)
Hours are 10 pm – 8 am only.		
Barton Data	971-9659	Wildcat (IBM, etc)
Mac-Info	981-4899	??? (Macintosh)
Macintosh BBS	662-5046	??? (Macintosh)

This list is by no means complete. There are many other BBSes in the Ann Arbor area...some seem to come and go with the seasons.

Sample Merit Logon Session

<What I see initially logging on to Merit. What I type to connect is in italics.>

xx~~F–Hca%Terminal=
%Merit:Hermes (HO32:LF0E:NONE:EDIT=MTS)
Which Host? *do1200*
%H0E:HO32-AE<36>2C:H28 do1200

<Dialing Molin's Den ... unsuccessful because of phone error.>

HELLO:I'M READY
**d*
NUMBER? *94200407*
DIALING...
RINGING...
VOICE!

<Redialing a few times to see if I can get on anyway.>

**r*
NO. OF RETRIES? *3*
94200407
DIALING...
BUSY

<No luck. Calling Treasure CheST.>

**d*
NUMBER? *99739137*
DIALING...
RINGING...
ANSWER TONE
ONLINE
1200 Baud Connection
Can you use Vidtex (y/N)?

<Rest of this logon session deleted, but I am now on the board. If you wish to up/download, you would set the break parameters now.>

Suggestions and Comments for Merit

You can ask for help from a Merit User Consultant by calling (313) 764-9423 during business hours on Monday through Friday. You can also send suggestions and comments about the Merit network to Merit Computer Network, 5115 I.S.T. Building, 2200 Bonisteel Blvd., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 48109, and you can ask for a subscription to the Merit Network News at that same address.

Note: This manual is not written or approved by the Merit staff or by any representative of Merit. I wrote it entirely under my own initiative, to be released as a public domain manual. I take all responsibility for all material contained within this manual.

Late Breaking Merit News

Merit is in the process of replacing their dial-out modems with 300/1200/2400 baud, Hayes-compatable ones. So, if you see an "OK" prompt instead of an "*" then you have connected to one of their new modems. To call out, type:

ATDT9nnn-nnnn

where you replace nnn-nnnn with the phone number of the BBS you wish to call. Also, if DO2400, etc. doesn't work, try DIALOUT-AA.

Coming soon...DIALOUT-EL?? East Lansing has been considering installation of a dial out modem. Testing is in progress. CHAOS BBS a local call from around the state soon? Hope so!

Graphics Transformer from Alpha Systems

Reviewed by Frank Fellheimer (GKAUG)

[Editors' Note: Special thanks goes to Alpha Systems for providing a copy of their program for review. Alpha Systems has gone even a step further and has donated this software package to the reviewing club.]

I think this just may be one of those programs I have been looking for in the last year since I really started using PrintShop and TypeSetter to make labels and billboard signs, not to forget newsletters.

Graphics Transformer allows you to use the original PrintShop Icons, enlarge or shrink them and save the files to use in TypeSetter and a number of other special forms: Magniprint II+, Koala Pad, Atari Touch Tablet, Micro Painter, PrintShop Screen Magic, and ComputerEyes. This is really handy for me since I can now access my PrintShop icons (from the original disk) and enlarge any of them for use with my TypeSetter program. This saves me a lot of time trying to draw my own icons since I am not much of an artist.

Once you have saved the icons (in whatever format) you can modify them by using the appropriate program. I took PrintShop icons, enlarged them, modified them by using the sketch pad section of TypeSetter and resaved the final file for later use in designing my newsletter pages.

One really nice feature is the program's ability to take a PrintShop icon, stamp several on the screen (I did 12 on my screen), enclose several within the confines of the four cursor corners that appear on your screen and *shrink* the whole set to PrintShop icon size...this can give some added detail.

When shrinking is done, you are allowed to look at several sets on the screen in different shadings. You pick the one you like best and save it on disk. It's a little confusing the first time you see the different selections, but after you've seen a few, you understand what is happening.

Like a lot of other devoted computer users, at first I neglected to read the instruction manual before booting up the program. I could say I did that so I could see how easy or difficult the program was to use... but it's because I'm basically too lazy to read them until I absolutely need to! Take my word for it, you need to read the instruction manual.

There are two main programs: Graphics Workshop and Picture Conversion Utility. The Graphics Workshop allows you to load in your icons and change their sizes (four available sizes up to full screen). It's great to have control over the size of an icon!

The Picture Conversion part of the software allows you to change the format and save from one form to another: Fun with Art, B/Graph, Graphics Master, Super Sketch, Strip Poker, Movie Maker (background only), Atari Graphics Light Pen, SynGraph... Quite a list! Basically, the pictures can be converted to Magniprint II+ format and then can be loaded into the Graphics Workshop for rework and saving.

Finally, after mass confusion on my part, I decided to read the instruction manual. Much better this way! It will take a little use to really get the feel of this program, but you will pick it up. It's not difficult. You will need to have several disks available for your saves, and keeping track of your files may be the most difficult part of the whole operation. We all label our disks though, don't we??

Overall, I found this program to be a handy addition to my utilities library. It is especially useful for those of us that enjoy using a printer for art work as well as text. My thanks to MAM and Alpha Systems for giving me the opportunity to review this program.

New Software Releases!

Spectrum 512

Cyberpaint Animation

Test Drive

Gauntlet

Mavis Beacon Typing Tutor

Phasar

WORD PERFECT

($99.95 w/ Student Discount)

Stop In or Call

STATE STREET COMPUTER

334 South State St.
Ann Arbor MI, 48104
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An Introduction to MIDI
Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying & Love Electronic Music

By Paul Clark (CHAOS)

MIDI, which stands for Musical Instrument Digital Interface, was first intended to allow different synthesizers to communicate using a standard hardware interface and data language, but the obvious next step of using personal computers to manage all this data has brought about a revolution in electronic music. Now, in addition to hooking any synth up to any other synth, you can use your computer to assist music composition, editing, and performance, even to print out standard music notation, not to mention progamming your synthesizer.

Using a sequencing program, you can record music one track at a time just like a multi-track recording studio, but with the additional editing power of a word processor. Using a computer this way to control all the aspects of music creation, you no longer *have* to rely on other musicians (or technicians!) to produce finished work. In addition, the low cost makes much of the creative power of the recording studio available to the average user.

Much modern music uses the recording studio as a part of the creative process, adding track upon track to create the sound. With professional studio time running upwards of $400/hr, if you have a bad day, you've just blown $3000+! (To say nothing of what this kind of pressure does for your inspiration.) Unless you were the Beatles, you had to either be rich to do this, or be commercial enough to guarantee a record company a hit.

Now you can do the creating at home, at your leisure, and if you decide to record you just bring your equipment into the studio and play it back into the master. The result -- already you can find many very creative and experimental music out there that just wouldn't have gotten out ten years ago, both at the top and in small, homemade releases. The MIDI revolution really is an excellent example of high tech putting creative power in the hands of the individual, rather than just big business and the wealthy. (Not unlike desktop publishing, or BBS nets, or....)

What is MIDI, really?

There are two parts to MIDI: hardware and data exchange. The hardware standard specifies a 5-pin DIN plug and cable (of which only 3 lines are used), and standardizes voltage etc., so things don't blow up. Each cable sends a message one way, and (almost) all devices have three MIDI ports: IN, OUT, and THRU which echoes out whatever arrives from the IN port. This allows you to make a whole string of slave units run by one controller. With all the different permutations of control and equipment, this allows the user to change configuration just by plugging and unplugging cables. (This is also cheap, and most musicians would rather buy another instrument if they could avoid spending money elsewhere.)

The data standards describe the way the data is sent: The first byte tells what kind of data is coming, and then the next are data bytes. For example, if you press the middle-C on your keyboard, your synthesizer sends 3 bytes: the first is a note-on command, the high 4 bits of which are 1001 (for note-on); the second tells the note played (middle C=60); and the third tells the velocity, or how hard you hit the key. There are many other "system common" messages like this -- pitch bend, modulation, program change, etc., and some synths can be made to react to them any way you like -- for instance, a modulation message can increase or decrease the volume of a note, or perhaps the timbre of it, etc.

There are also "system exclusive" messages, which are exclusive to each particular model of synth. These usually have to do with internal programming of the instrument, and they allow you to store or edit voice data via a computer program, for instance. In this case, one byte is sent (240 for sys excl.), which means that whatever follows is a system exclusive message. This is followed by an ID for the particular synth model, and any other synth will just ignore the rest. After the data another byte is sent (247), meaning "end of sys excl. message," and all other synths start listening again.

The other aspect of MIDI data is the channelization. As mentioned, with system common messages, the high 4 bits tell what kind of data is coming. The low 4 bits assign a 'channel' to the message-only devices set to receive on that channel will listen to it, the rest will ignore it. With a sequencer, you could record many tracks all at once, then play them back with each track set to a different channel, to be played by

different instruments set to the various channels. In this way, 16 channels can be sent simultaneously along the same MIDI lines.

What is a Sequencer?

At this point, you've probably already figured out what a sequencer does -- it records incoming MIDI data in a way that simulates a recording studio, assigning a real-time marker on each piece of data so that it can be sent back with perfect timing. Notice that it doesn't record sound, only MIDI data, which describes keystrokes and other controls; in this way, the data file created by a sequencer is more analogous to a player-piano roll than a tape recording -- it just specifies the notes, the sound depends on the instrument.

Most sequencers are set up to look like a multi-track recorder; intuitively, that's what it feels like to use one, and it's a really wonderful way to set down musical ideas and work with them. Particularly for those who don't read music or who don't write it easily enough to compose freely on paper, sequencers are a godsend.

The first sequencers were entirely hardware-based, that is, you bought a sequencer as a box with controls, now the only advantage of these is to withstand the abuse of road tours. Although many still use them, there are too many advantages to software sequencers not to recommend them, especially for the home user.

Finally, the $64,000 question: What does it all cost?

(Please note that these are estimates, made 1/88. Check a music store for specifics. Note also that like computers, there is a difference between list and mail-order prices, and these often vary inversely with the amount of customer service and support given.)

Synthesizers: These vary so widely by type and features that there isn't room to go into detail. You should consider how seriously you want to pursue keyboard playing -- this means "do you want full-sized keys?" Mini-keyboards with MIDI interfaces start at a couple of hundred, and seem to be coming down all the time. Full-sized keyboards seem to start at $500, and at about $1000 you start reaching the serious musician's instruments -- samplers and FM synths, etc. Most popular synths are somewhere in the $1000-$2500 range.

There are many makes, so you'll just have to start by checking them out. Lately, Ensoniq has been outdoing everybody by offering amazingly powerful synths for extremely competitive prices. (To editorialize for a second, I don't like the way they sound- but I own one anyway. I'll also plug my favorite -- for my money Korg has the best-made and best-sounding instruments. I am devoted to my DSS-1 sampler). But there are also Yamaha, Roland, E-mu, Akai, etc, etc...

There is also, of course, the top-end, which includes the $70,000-$120,000 Fairlight, which comes with its own mainframe (buy me one too, while you're at it). Oh yeah, there's also a complete synclavier setup for $2.5 million...!

Many synths are also available as modules, that is, without a keyboard -- they look like pieces of stereo equipment, and are controlled solely through MIDI. This way, you can add more voices for less money, as they cost a good deal less. But you needn't control them with only a keyboard, Oh no....

Other non-keyboard controllers available include guitar synths, which are either units that attach to a normal guitar and send MIDI data about the notes played, or dedicated units that only generate MIDI, no sound. Generally, these cost as much as whole keyboard synths, but Suzuki just came out with the XG-1m for just $299, amazing us all. It's cheaply built, okay, but get the Yamaha TX81Z,(a nice little rack-mount FM synth for $499) and you have a whole guitar synth system for less than a grand!

There are also MIDI violins, saxophones, bass pedals, even the down-home pedal steel is available as a MIDI controller.

Computer Interfaces

Atari has a jump on other computers here. The ST comes with built-in MIDI ports, although it has a funky set-up for the THRU. (It's OK, though, most folks don't need a THRU on a computer, and it's not much sweat to set it up if you need it). This, plus its low cost, has made the ST very popular among musicians. There is also a wide variety of MIDI software available (this is what I use).

Prices for MIDI interface hardware (to manage the serial port) are around the following: IBM PC/ compatibles $200, Macintosh $125, Amiga $75, Commodore 64 $75, Apple $75.

→

Along with the Atari ST, the Macintosh has enjoyed much popularity with musicians, partly because of its 'user-friendliness'. There is a lot of very good software for the Mac, including much of the high-end stuff. The PC is less widely used, but there is software out, including much of the better stuff. There is also very nice software for the Amiga as well. The Apple and Commodore were around early on, and there's still software around for them, new releases trickling down to the Commodore, with still less for the Apple.

Software

There's a lot out there, from $15 bucks to $1000. You can get a simple sequencer for the Atari for $50, and nice ones are $200+. In many ways they're like a word processor, you get what you pay for, and prices are comparable. Prices are similar for the Commodore and Apple, but tend to be higher for Mac, PC, and Amiga, in about the same ratio as most other software. Check a catalog for other types-- there's everything from patch librarians to score writers to ear training tutorials.

What else is MIDI?

Lately, even more things can be controlled via MIDI. Many rack-mounted signal processors, from delays to reverb to what-have-you, can be controlled by MIDI. If you think this is extravagance, consider the possibilities of having all the settings stored on file as part of a song so that all your devices are preset for you, so you can concentrate on more important things (like singing!).

I just looked at a Yamaha MIDI-automated mixing board -- it was wild to see all those sliders moving by themselves! At $4000, it isn't cheap, but compared with the price of a self-contained programmable remix board, which it replaces, this is a steal. Even stage lights can be run by MIDI -- basically, anything that is electrically controlled can be (I'm waiting for the MIDI-controlled studio coffeemaker). This is nothing new to the computer world, but having it all standardized by MIDI can and does drastically reduce costs of a system customized to your needs. (In some ways it makes it all like a giant Lego set, where you can put all the parts together to make anything you want!)

More Info

Check out Electronic Musician and Keyboard magazines, and stop by a local music store (I go to Marshall Music in Frandor Mall, Lansing.). For more details on MIDI, I recommend Music through MIDI, by M. Boom, $19.95. You can find it at Jocundry's Books in E. Lansing (okay, I do happen to work there, but that's not a plug, really!)

Leave me a message here or at the bookstore -- I'm always glad to chat or help out, and I'd like to see anyone else's MIDI setup as well.

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ST Notes

by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Well, Christmas is past and Santa was very, *very* good to me!! He brought me a sound digitizer by Alpha Systems, so look for a review of it in coming ST Notes. (I'll get to it just as soon as I finish my review on Laser-C, and my review on Tackle Box ST, and... Well, you get the idea.) After last months review I thought that I'd just try to cover some of the new public domain programs that I've run across over the past couple of months, and tell you where to find them.

Do you have a need to run monochrome software on your color monitor? If so, then check out MONOWARE.PRG, file #5433 on Genie. This short program (1739 bytes!!) performs monochrome emulation in software and it even fools the shifter chip! I've successfully run Tinystuff, Publishing Partner, VIP, and countless other pieces of software in monochrome mode – and they all work! However, there's no such thing as a free lunch and the program has one drawback – it's slow. Moving the mouse too fast will leave the pointer on the screen in the lurch. But hey, it really does work, so I guess I can put up with some slowness during the infrequent times that I really need Monochrome emulation. When the program is run, it asks for a number from 10-80. A low number will give you smooth mouse movements and screen repaints, while making the actual program run at very slow speeds (30-40% of the normal speed of the ST). A high number will result in jerky mouse movements and repaints, but the program will run considerably faster (70-80%). Get it from Genie, or from the TAG club library!!

Backing up all of your unprotected software can consume a lot of disks – unless you happen to have a program called "The Shadow Archiver", file #4872 on Genie. This neat little PD program reads in an entire disk, one track at a time, and compresses it, saving the entire disk into one file. The compressed file includes boot sector information and all folders! Of course, Shadow also uncompresses and restores a disk to it's original form. A typical 400K (800K) disk will compress to about 300K (550K). Arcing the file results in even further savings, giving a final file size of about 250K (450K). Using this program, you could compress an entire disk, send the file to a friend over your modem where he could restore it to it's original form! This would be a great vehicle for transferring organized PD disks!! It's also good for simply backing up your disks.

Well, that covers the unprotected stuff, but what about the protected stuff you say? If you haven't rushed out and bought ProCopy, then the next best thing is MedCopy, file #5522 on Genie. This public domain copier is the *BEST* PD copier I've ever seen. It will back up virtually any piece of protected software that you own, and will do it quickly! It's also a good program to use to quickly copy club PD disks. It handles both single and double sided disks, and can copy up to 84 tracks. The program is menu driven and easy to use.

The last program I'll cover this month is Megamatic, file #5424 on Genie. Megamatic is a program that goes in your auto folder and performs a variety of functions at boot time. These functions include:

1) A Reset proof ram disk that can be configured as any drive from C to P and any size from 128K to 2MB. At power up you can select a size other than your configured default with a simple keystroke.

2) A print spooler that is configurable from 16K to 144K. Pressing CNTL/SHIFT/ALT-0 will zero the buffer and abort printing. This is a VERY nice feature!

3) Set disk verify on or off. Setting the disk verify off will speed up disk operations considerably.

4) MegaMatic displays which drives are connected (including ram disks) at power up.

5) You can enable a screen saver that will turn your screen off after a preset time (3-9 minutes). Moving the mouse or touching a key restores the screen.

6) Free Ram is displayed at power up.

7) If the memory check is enabled, MegaMatic will perform a slow and fast memory check at power up.

8) An Autodesk feature allows for the automatic selection of either a low, medium, or high res desktop at bootup (LOWDESK.INF, MEDDESK.INF, and HIGHDESK.INF).

9) A Cold or Warm reset can be performed with the CNTL/SHIFT/ALT-* (COLD) or the CNTL/SHIFT/ALT-. (WARM).

This program is *packed* with features and it's only 4K in size!! Better yet, it only uses 1K of your precious memory! (Not counting the size of your ram disk or print spooler of course.) It's really a 'gotta have' program! Included is a Config program that sets up MegaMatic with the features that YOU want. Every feature can be enabled or disabled at power up – the choice is yours.

I'll wrap up this month's column with some tid bits of information:

→

ProCopy 1.60 should be available by the time you read this. Some of the programs on ProCopy's conquered list include: Dungeon Master, Test Drive, and Dark Castle.

Laser-C is available from Megamax and is a MAJOR upgrade from Megamax C. Some of the features include an extensible ram cache (I'll explain when I do my review), removal of the 32K limitation, DRI compatible linker, and more. Best of all, it's only a $20 upgrade for existing Megamax C owners!

Pascal 2.0 version 2.02 has some serious bugs. Return your disks (with $3.00) to OSS to receive an upgrade to 2.03.

Computability is selling Thompson 4120 monitors with an RGB cable for ST's for $80 less than the Atari monitor. The resolution is equal to the current ST monitors and the screen is 14" as opposed to 12". The monitor also supports video and audio lines in, so you can use your VCR as a tuner! It also has a 'green screen' switch to make it easier on your eyes.

Well, that's about it. See you all next month. (By the way, if you have any comments or suggestions concerning my column, drop me a note on Genie!)

Two Winners From FTL Games

Review by Bob Retelle (MACE & WAUG)

After a long dry spell, FTL Games has just released two excellent games. Both "Dungeon Master" and "OIDS" are winners, although in completely different categories.

Dungeon Master

More than a year ago, FTL released a demo of a new game they were working on, called "Dungeon Master". The demo displayed amazing graphics and gave a tantalizing look at a game in the "Dungeons and Dragons" genre. At long last, Dungeon Master has arrived, and it was well worth the wait. In fact, this may well be the BEST game ever released for the Atari ST..!

The game comes with a large booklet which fills in the background against which the game is set. You play the part of the Grey Lord's apprentice, on a quest to recover the Wizard's Firestaff and defeat the evil Lord Chaos. Because the Catastrophe which split the Wizard into Good and Evil also affected you, making you an immaterial being, you must choose a party of four Champions to direct through the Dungeon in your place.

Your first stop on your trip into the Dungeon is the Hall of Champions to select your band of Adventurers. There are 24 to choose from, all with different characteristics, skills and equipment.

Once your group is formed, it's time to open the foreboding-looking door into the Dungeon and quest onward. From that point on, you will be drawn into the realism and magic of this game. The Dungeon is dark, so you will need either torches or magical spells to light your way. The darkness creeps back realistically as the torches burn low, giving an eerie feeling of reality to the exploration of the tunnels.

Suddenly you detect a flicker of motion in the darkness ahead... is it a band of mummies hovering just outside the circle of light from your torch? Or is it another pair of nasty blue trolls waiting to bash you with their clubs..? Whatever it is, it's coming down the tunnel toward you and you'd better get ready!

There is a multitude of clever tricks and puzzles to solve, in addition to the hordes of realistically animated creatures to slay. Careful searching is a necessity, because not all the interesting items in the Dungeon are immediately obvious. Iron keys lying on the grey stones of the floor are devilishly hard to spot..! There are levers to pull, locks to unlock and pits to watch out for, as well as helpful (for the most part, that is..!) messages scratched on the walls. Scrolls will initiate you into the ways of Magic, and you'll find morsels of food scattered about as well.

The user interface in Dungeon Master is excellent. Because the game runs in 'real-time', this is extremely important, especially during battles. You control the actions of your players with the mouse, choosing weapons, order of battle and type of attack. A great deal of information about each of your characters is available to you in a nicely logical layout, from their physical condition and inventory, to how hungry and thirsty they happen to be. All options and status reports are available during battles too, so you can even prepare a healing potion to gulp down between swipes at the nasties.

Game play is interspersed with high quality digitized sound effects which add immensely to the realism of the game. When you pull a lever, you hear the rattle of chains opening a massive door. Bump your party into a wall and they make a very realistic "Ooof!"

As richly detailed and complex as Dungeon Master is, FTL Games has managed to compress all the graphics, sounds and little touches which add so

much to the game onto one single-sided diskette. The game will run on a standard unmodified 520 ST, and requires a color monitor or TV.

Dungeon Master is so complex and involving that messages asking questions and giving playing hints have been appearing in unprecedented numbers on Compuserve and other information services, as well as local computer Bulletin Board Systems. While it's definitely possible to solve the puzzles and win the game by yourself, it's nice to know that you're not alone when you're stuck!

About the only thing I could find to complain about is the fact that Dungeon Master has become so popular, it took me several weeks to locate it in stock anywhere..!

This game is highly recommended for everyone! It has elements of action games, role-playing games, and Adventure puzzle games, as well as showing off the sound and graphics capabilities of the Atari ST.

OIDS

Another excellent program from FTL Games, OIDS is a little bit difficult to classify. Perhaps it can be best described as a "Combat Lunar-Lander Choplifter Adventure".

The packaging and story-line premise of the game actually have little to do with the game itself, something which may hurt sales. I know I probably would have passed it up if I hadn't read messages about it on Compuserve which gave me an idea of what it really was like.

Supposedly the Fiendish Biocretes are turning the poor defenseless robot 'Oids' into toasters and vending machines. It's your mission to fly in and liberate them from their oppressors. In actuality, the game is very similar to "Choplifter," in that you have to blast open the domes where the 'Oids' are imprisoned, then land and pick up the little waving characters and fly them back up to your Mother Ship. (Choplifter players will be relieved to know that the Oids are smart enough not to run under your ship as you're landing!)

In this game, the mission is complicated by an entire array of nasty planetoid defenses. There are fixed 'DinoGun' emplacements shooting at you, Missile Launchers which fire missiles that follow your ship, "Bonus Towers" which rise sneakily out of the ground and explode catastrophically and Biocrete Bases which spew out all kinds of unfriendly things! There are more defenses, each with its own devious method of attack, including Repulsor Beams and Tractor Beams.

All of this takes place in "Galaxies" of increasing difficulty, each made up of several "Planetoids." As the difficulty of the Galaxies becomes greater, the Planetoids become more and more unfriendly, with craggy mountains to snag your ship, and narrow, twisting passageways to negotiate. I know for a certainty there are quite a few Planetoids I'll never see in the course of a normal game!

There are fuel dumps to refuel your ship and transporter pads which will zap you off to parts unknown, including deep within the planetoids. To protect your ship when things get hectic, you can activate your shields which makes you invulnerable... while they last. Recharging the shields takes fuel, which is always in short supply. Luckily, every time you return to the Mother Ship with a full load of Oids, it's refueled for you.

Once again, FTL has incorporated a very well done set of player controls. The ship is a true ballistic object, much like the ship in "Asteroids". Once you get moving by thrusting, you have to turn the ship around and thrust in the opposite direction to stop. The controls consist of rotating the ship left or right, thrusters, and toggling the shields on and off. The controls are responsive and quick and can be played from either the keyboard or joystick. My only complaint is that with the joystick you fire your "NovaBombs" by "double-clicking" the fire button. In the heat of battle, it's all too easy to accidentally loose a NovaBomb and nuke an Oids dome. It's a good attempt to solve the problem of two weapons systems and only one fire button though, and it gets better with practice.

As good as the game itself is, there's even more included in the package. FTL has given us an "OIDS Construction Set" in the form of a game editor and librarian program. You can modify the existing Planetoids which come on the game disk, or start from scratch and design your own devious Planetoids for your friends to play. The game librarian allows you to move "Game Libraries" of Galaxies to and from a separate disk. The editor lets you easily draw complex mountainscapes, and place up to 64 objects on the screen, then playtest your new Planetoid.

This "Test Game" feature of the editor is the *only* way I've seen some of the advanced levels. I've resigned myself to the fact that I'll never get through →

them as part of a regular game, they're that tough! One thing that must be stressed is that OIDS is *not* a high speed "shoot-'em-up" kind of game. There is plenty of action, but most of the time you'll be ever-so-slowly inching your way through narrow caverns, delicately balancing gravity with short bursts on your thrusters. In fact, you have to be careful not to get going too fast, since it takes an equal, but opposite amount of thrust to slow you down again.

I did find something that disturbed me about the program, which had nothing to do with the game itself--the way it reacts to the disk being write-protected. As soon as I took the disk out of the box, I slid the write-protect tab over, as I do on all my commercial disks. When I tried to boot the game however, it went as far as the OIDS logo and stopped. I'd been having trouble with my 1 Meg RAM upgrade at this time, so I eventually went as far as to unplug the expansion board. The game still refused to boot.

Finally, as a last resort, I removed the write-protection and the disk booted. It really makes me nervous to have a program writing onto the original disk, especially when all it's doing normally is writing the high scores. I prefer the way games from MichTron handle it, where you can write-protect the disk and they just shrug it off and go on playing if they can't save the high scores.

In all, this is an excellent game, well executed, and with very good graphics. It's highly recommended, for both arcade game players and action-adventure players.

Living with the XEP80

A Subjective review by Wally Wong
Reprinted from the December Puget Sound Atari News.

[Editor's note: Because of problems with space, the first part of this article appeared in last month's issue.]

The following are some thrills and chills related to the 80-column display of the XEP80 I've experienced during the course of a month since I bought the XEP80. Remember, these are still preliminary experiences and are not conclusive, especially the items listed in CHILLS. I qualify that because the XEP80 handler is relocatable and compatability may just be finding the right spot for the handler.

80-Column Thrills

It is compatable with SparaDOS 3.2. The XEP80 handler (the AUTORUN.SYS file on the distribution disk) must be installed through the STARTUP.BAT. I renamed the AUTORUN.SYS file to XEP80.COM and when creating the STARTUP.BAT file, the XEP80 file should be the last item in the batch. I have not tried it with the Time/Date display (TD) line since I rarely use it because of the conflicts with other programs. Note: If you happen to setup your ramdisk (RD.COM) after installing the handler, you'll get garbage on the screen. I found turning the XEP80 off and back on, the screen clears and behaves.

Atari BASIC – you still have a maximum of three lines per line, but now three lines equals 240 characters instead of 120. I would refrain from extending BASIC lines beyond 120 to maintain compatability between the XEP80 and standard 40-column screens. SETCOLOR and DRAWTO commands cannot be used.

MAC/65, YES! The display is good on a color monitor and great on a monochrome. The doc file provides plenty of information to develop some great applications taking advantage of the XEP80. I've been looking at some PD/Shareware text editors written in BASIC that could easily be modified to use the XEP80. Remember to give credit to the author if you play on using existing programs as a foundation for your programming. I'll leave it to your good programming morals to contact authors before you start hacking someone's program and distributing them.

The demo programs on the distribution disk are a great source for programming ideas and tips on how to use the many attributes of the XEP80.

80-Column Chills There are no programs available that use the XEP80 except for the demo programs.

AtariWriter 80, if I may call it that, will be a couple of months before it is released. Contrary to some rumors that the AW80 was cancelled or shelved, the AW80 is being worked on according to Neil Harris on GEnie.

No ACTION! XEP80 does not like the way ACTION! behaves with the screen.

No BASIC XE. Same reason as above. Probably the same with BASIC XL.

I also found that with the system on, it may try to

reboot when turning the XEP80 off and on with DOS 2.5, sometimes. Turning the XEP80 off and on like this is probably not good for your system, so make sure you process the SpartaDOS batch files correctly to avoid this.

Inconvenience between switching plugs connecting the monitor between the video cable coming out of my XE and the XEP80. You can't have both connected at the same time. There are two solution: A) Run out and buy a monochrome composite monitor. Connect the XEP80 into this monitor and keep the video connected to the color composite monitor (or vice versa if your present monitor is monochrome) or; B) Build a switch box that will handle all the different connections. Plans for the switch box that I built are simple, and I'll submit it to PSAN for publication...next month.

Have programs that use Display Lists Interrupts? Forget it. Can't use DRAWTO or SETCOLOR command of BASIC, not to mention graphic modes other than Graphic 0.

Here is the list of programs I've played with, and the results:
PAPERCLIP -- unable to boot XEP80 handler without turning system off and back on to boot PAPERCLIP.
AtariWriter -- no go.
AtariWriter Plus -- no go.
XLent's First Wordprocessor -- no go.
SpeedScript -- no go, locks up.
TextPro -- almost, you can load the handler with Textpro, but the characters are hidden. You can even load a file and send it to the printer through the XEP80 printer interface, but the characters are not displayed on the screen, though you can get a menu lising and "see" the files listed.

Printer Thrills

It seems to work fine with Atari BASIC. Haven't tried any BASIC graphic printing programs yet.

FontMaster works.

Printer Chills

Since just about all the wordprocessors were written before the XEP80 was released and weren't expected to work with the XEP80, it follows that it wouldn't work with the XEP80 printer interface either. So, don't throw the one you have now away until you're sure the XEP80 will replace it.

Neutral Notes

Be sure you try out the monitor with the XEP80 before you buy. Some monitors have a 40 or 80 column switch either inside or outside. This switch might have to be set to obtain a decent display (as suggested by Darryl, Atari Tech.).

If your monochrome monitor looks fine in 40 columns, but you get flashes of indecipherable dots, try adjusting the horizontal hold. Again, this adjustment might be internal, so think before you jump.

The XEP80 supports bit-mapped graphics, 320x200. The XEP80 handler replaces the E:, S: and P: vectors in the Handler Address Table.

Personal Touch

I believe this is the single product that could make or break the "only a game machine" mentality concerning the 8bit Ataris. Due to the inavailability of XEP80 compatable software, this item is going to sit around on vendors' shelves for a long time. At this point, the only people expected to buy the XEP80 would be the die-hard 8bit software developers and hardware hackers like me.

I see the XEP80 as the key to the "next" wave of Atari 8bit software. Don't be disappointed with Atari or software publishers. Almost all the software available now was developed long before Atari conceived the XEP80 design, and I don't know if the XEP80 could have been designed to work with "yesterday's" software.

The sales of the XEP80 must be low or distribution is scare by the communications I come across on some of the paid BBSes. I heard one user working on a VT100 program to take advantage of the XEP80. I've been tinkering around with a simple word processor for the XEP80. If we can get enough hackers with these modules, we'll start to have something to use with our XEP80s. Atari is working on the 80-column AtariWriter, and it's soon to be released. I don't see software publishers beating the doors down to give us something to use with the XEP80, especially with the sales of the modules at a trickle. It's the old Catch 22; the software publishers won't develop software for the handful of XEP80s that have been sold, and Atari won't be able to sell the XEP80s because there's nothing to drive it.

Another major flaw with the XEP80 is the parallel printer port. It may be fine and dandy with the 80-column AtariWriter, but users are going to have problems with existing software. The "defacto" standard Atari interface is the 850, no question about →

that. Atari should have designed the printer interface with the 850 in mind, i.e. the serial I/O port, just like ALL the other interfaces. Users are going to be forced to buy another printer interface if they want to run PrintShop or any other programs that are SIO designed. In my opinion, they should have left this out and lowered the price or designed it with the SIO in mind. The solution would probably be for someone to modify the OS with the proper printer handlers and burn them into EPROMs.

To qualify my negativity about the printer interface more than the 80 column aspects of XEP80 -- the 80-column design is new, and I didn't expect everything, or anything at that, to function with it.

On the other hand, mostly all the existing programs that communicate to printers were written with the 850 in mind, and for the XEP80 to deviate from this standard is wrong. By deviation, I'm referring to the installation of the printer handlers via software. So, I'll keep my 850, thank you, and concentrate on the 80 column.

The 80 column is very nice and sharp, and lends itself to some great software ready to be written to take advantage of it. If the new software is done well, and released in reasonable time, and the advent of the new disk drive, and maybe a drop in price, the Atari XE will be the most affordable, versatile and serious computer system on the market. Imagine the day when new computer buyers chose the Atari because it's *affordable* and *does the job well!!!!!*.. and it has great graphics and games. We know this already; now it's time for the public to find out.

If you have any questions or comments about this review, or the XEP80 in general, you can reach me on Compuserve[75126,3463] or GEnie[WWONG]. If you are planning to include this review in your newsletter, I'd appreciate a copy of the newsletter or just a note indicating so.

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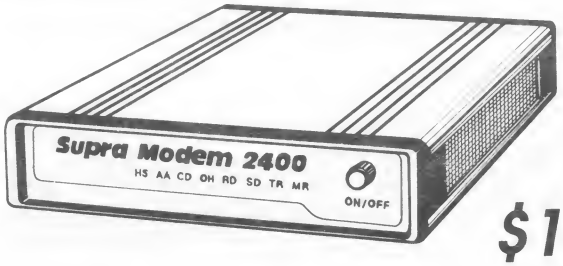

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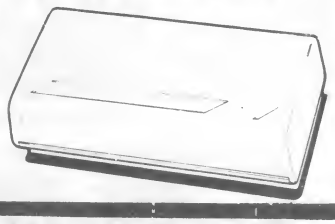

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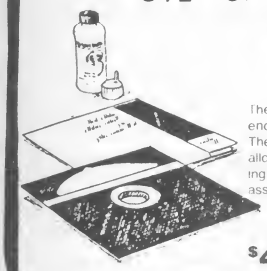

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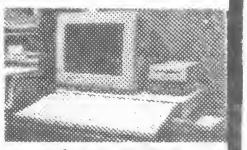

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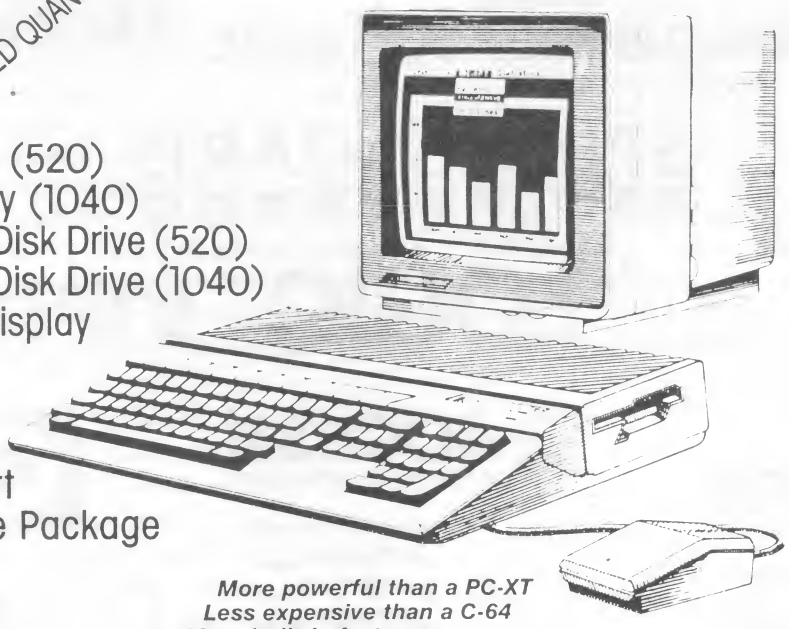

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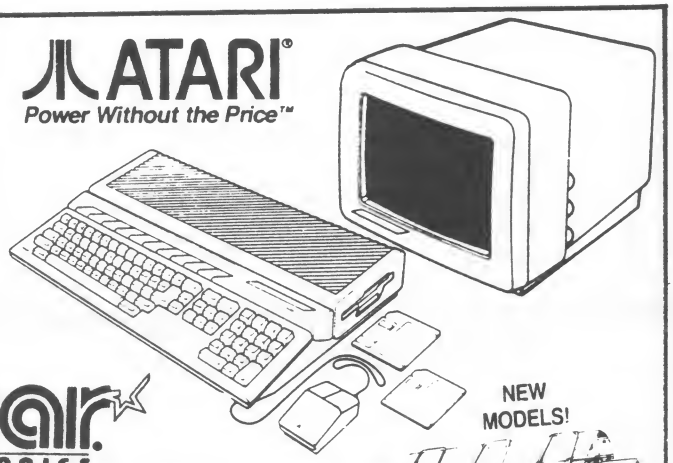

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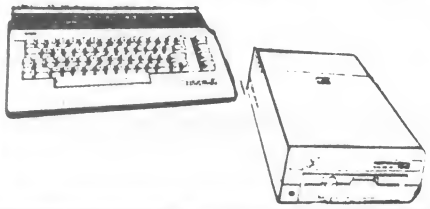

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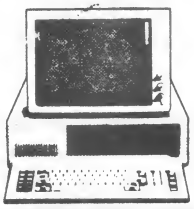

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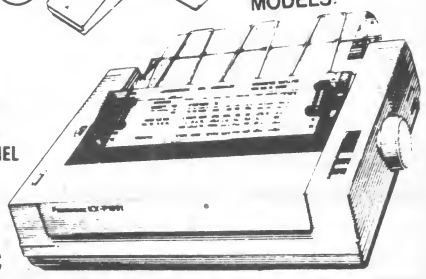

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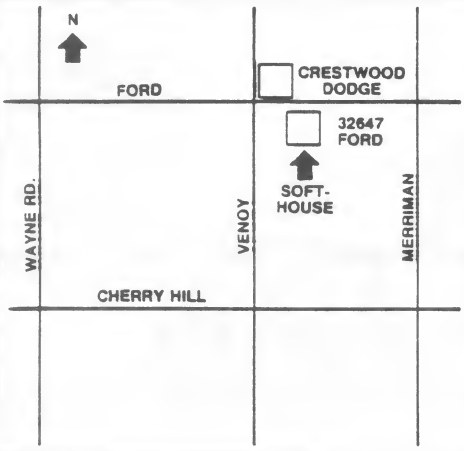

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Bits of BASIC

'Protecting' Your 8-Bit Software (Cont'd)
By M. Olin (MACE, WAUG)

Last month (MAM, January '88), I discussed some ways to keep prying eyes from viewing your software coding routines by making it very difficult to LIST your BASIC programs. This month I thought it might be nice to describe an interesting technique that could help prevent COPYing of your programs as well. The operations described herein are designed for use with Atari DOS 2.x and may not work with other DOSes. As always, there are methods which will circumvent the procedure described below, so there are no guarantees implied in this writing. Nonetheless, it makes for interesting experimentation which is always encouraged! (REMEMBER: keep a backup copy of your programs in case something should not work as expected. The modifications described below should never be performed on your original diskettes.)

You are, we shall assume, well aware that choosing item 'A' from the DOS menu screen will give you a directory listing of the files that are on the disk in Drive #1. On requesting this command, one quickly notices the standard format of the data that is retrieved from the Directory Entry Table (sectors #361-368): the first byte indicates if the file is write-locked (an asterisk is displayed,) bytes #3-10 are the file name, #11-13 are the file extender, and #15-17 indicate the amount of disk space used by this file (in number of sectors.)

As you take a closer look at the display, you will quickly notice the filenames are all in upper case alpha characters. Digits 0-9 are allowed in all positions, excluding the very first character which MUST be A-Z; punctuation and imbedded spaces are taboo. Our exercise today will be to alter this condition, thereby allowing other characters to be used. Once this is done, your files can be named in such a manner as to permit the use of the more cryptic Atascii graphics character set which would make the Directory listing virtually illegible.

We will do this, as you will soon see, by altering some important memory locations within the DOS program. The result will be that, without having a copy of your DOS disk, the "enemy" will not be able to use the COPY command from the DOS command menu to move your program onto another disk. S/He simply will not be able to make DOS find your program, hence the COPY command will not work.

re's how it's done: by changing two memory locations in the DOS "Decode Filenames" routine, additional characters are allowed. POKEing memory location 3818 with a new value (try using 1, the Atascii CTRL-A character) will determine the lowest Atascii character code permitted for use when defining a filename. We will then POKE location 3822 with the Atascii value (try using 57, the Atascii code for the number 0) that represents the highest Atascii character code permitted for use. Once the changes are made, we simply enter the "DOS" command from BASIC, then create new DOS files on the target disk using the 'H' WRITE DOS FILES command. The changes that we have made will only work if a disk containing the modified DOS is booted. Notice that the highest allowable character is LOWER THAN 'A' (Atascii 65) therefore NO standard alpha characters will be accepted at all!

When you are done writing your program, you can SAVE it to this new disk by simply holding the Control key down while specifying the filename in the SAVE "D:filename" command. If your BASIC program makes regular use of disk-based data files, you will also need to make sure these files are appropriately named within your BASIC code.

By experimenting with this idea, you will find any number of ways to alter your program names, and the insights you will gain into the inner working of Atari DOS will be of great benefit to you in the future.

Silicon Spelunking
Tos Takes Parameters

Copyright (C)1988 by Brian Hall (WAUG)

Command Line interpreters (CLIs) have been out for the ST almost since day one. From the COMMAND.PRG that came with the developers kit to Pcommand, Gulag, and MT C-Shell. What they all have in common are commands built-in to the CLI along with the ability to execute programs from within the CLI. Some, such as MT C-shell even have DIR and PRINT as external commands. All of these programs are of the TTP type -- TOS Takes Parameters.

The Good News and the Bad News

The limitation of this is that you may not (legally) use GEM in these programs. The advantage is that you may pass a string to the program. For example, in Pcommand you could type in the following line:
ARC X SILICON1 *.*

→

ARC is the name of the program to run (since ARC is not a built-in (or intrinsic) command of Pcommand. Because ARC is of the TTP variety, the whole string is passed to the program ARC and is known as the argument.

That's nice, but what does it DO?

With the language C, you can optionally declare two parameters to the function called "main". These are "argc" and "argv". To set things up, you must declare argc as an int, and argv as a pointer to pointers of characters – in other words, an array of pointers to strings, or a string array. This looks something like:
main(argc,argv) int argc; char *argv[];

When your code is executed, argc will equal the number of paramters you passed to the program, plus one for the name of the program itself. Argv will contain each word of the command line as a seperate string. In the above ARC example, arc would equal 4 and argc would look like this:
argv[0]="ARC" argv[1]="SILICON1" argv[2]="X" argv[3]="*.*
"

Note that with some CLIs (and with GEM) argv[0] may NOT be "ARC" but simply a null string. This isn't all that bad, but it is nice to be able to print the name of the program if the user doesn't enter the correct parameters.

Putting it All Together

There are two example programs this month, echo.c and strings.c. They are both somewhat like commands of the same name found under the Unix operating system. Echo will simply echo back all of the words on the command line, one per line. Strings is nifty. Give it a filename and it will show you all of the text strings in it. Very useful to get a peek at some binary files. Just try "STRINGS -10 STRINGS.TTP" (without the quote marks) to see all of the text in the strings program itself.

If you would like to download the text of this article, or the example programs, look in the MAM download area of the Treasure Chest at 313/973-9137. They can also be found in the Atari conference of the Neon Brain at 313/747-6260. You can reach them both via Merit.

Suggested Reading: The C Programming Language, Kernighan & Ritchie, Prentice-Hall. Next Month: Joysticks

```
/* echo.c - echo back the command line
 *  Copyright 1988, by Brian Hall
  * Created 01/19/88   * Updated 01/19/88 */
#include <stdio.h>

main(argc,argv)
int argc;
char *argv[];
{
int x;
for (x=0; x<argc; x++) puts(argv[x]);
}
```

```
/* strings.c - Program to display printable strings in a file.
 *  Copyright 1988 By Brian Hall
 * (uucp: ...itivax!emucsc!bhall)
 * Syntax: STRINGS [[[-n][file]]...]
 * Created 05/29/87
 * Updated 01/19/88 */
#include <stdio.h>
#include <ctype.h>
/* Maximum len of any single string we can handle */
#define MAXLEN 1024

main(argc,argv)
int argc;
char *argv[];
{
  int x,width=5;
  if (argc<2) puts("usage: STRINGS [[[-n][file]]...]");
  for (x=1;x<argc;x++) {
    if (*argv[x]=='-') width = -atoi(argv[x]);
    else strings(argv[x],width);
  }
}

strings(fname,width)
char *fname;
int width;
{
  FILE *fp;
  char ln[MAXLEN+1];
  int c,x=0;
  if ((fp=fopen(fname,"r"))==NULL) {
    printf("\nNo such file: %s\n——\n",fname);
    return 0;
  }
  printf("\nFile: %s  Width: %d\n——\n",fname,width);
  while ((c=fgetc(fp))> -1) {
    ln[x]=c;
    if (isprint(ln[x]) && x<MAXLEN) x++;
    else {
      if (x>=width) {
        ln[x++]=0;
        puts(ln);
      }
      x=0;
    }
  }
  return 1;
}
```

New 8bit Public Domain Software

By John Nagy

The 8bit public domain program supply seemed in danger of drying up a year or so ago when the ST was "the thing." But the flow of full-featured, large-scale applications software just keeps coming, and is available from user groups, on GEnie and CompuServe telecommunication pay services, as well as from private and club BBSes around the country.

Next month, look for a report on "Daisy Dot II," a remarkable letter-quality printing package that makes dot-matrix printers really sing. It is *three* full disks and is based on Roy Goldman's original package popular last year.

Another package I am still looking over is Signmaker, another public domain application that emulates much of PrintShop (a commercial program by Broderbund), but with even more control and content. It allows common fonts to be used in eight sizes on any combination of lines for remarkable posters and signs. More on it next month as well.

Meanwhile, Tom Hunt of Ashland, Ohio, has been developing software for the upgraded Atari XL/XE (256K and up) machines. His "The Works" package is a page-designer featuring "what you see is what you get" font and graphic control using standard Atari screen fonts (dozens available) and PrintShop converted icons. His program allows endlessly changing fonts and any number of joystick-placed icons on a sheet. Although certain features are lacking (like ability to get a disk directory from within the program), it is a very workable utility and will undoubtably be used for newsletters and projects of many kinds. Tom tells me he is still working on version #3 of The Works, but most of his effort is going into another 256K+ project – MTOS.

MTOS is an operating system extention written for the expanded machines that will actually allow you to load and run several programs at once! Multitasking "slices" the time up and distributes the computer's efforts across several jobs. The Atari was never expected to cope with that sort of thing, and speed is a problem even when executing *one* program, but for some applications, conducting several programs simultaneously, eventhough slower, might be just the thing. The internal printer buffer is just one that comes to mind, allowing you to continue to type or whatever while a long document prints.

Tom has released version 1 of MTOS and invites programmers and interested users to communicate with him via the Balloon Works BBS, 419-289-8392.

Each of these programs is available for free distribution from the major telecommunication services. Many of these public domain programs are distributed requesting the user send some donation to the author in proportion to their satsfaction. Usually $5 or so is suggested. This is the only reward most of the current flock of 8bit programmers will ever see, and they are reporting *very little* donations coming in. Even Keith Ledbetter, author of the fantastic Express terminal program series, has gotten next to nothing for his "shareware" projects. It seems Atari users just aren't used to paying anything for programs. Piracy virtually drove the commercial software market into a hole, and now the same attitude of something for nothing is encouraging our PD authors to produce *nothing* for nothing. How many times (if ever) have you sent a buck in appreciation of a shareware-type program? I'm no better, but I'm working on it. Maybe you could suggest to your local user group that they send something to a couple of the authors. After all, they wrote the programs the club sells in the disk library.

Modem Speaker Correction

by D.F. Neff

The January issue of MAM (Vol. 3, No. 1) contains a construction article titled "Add-on Modem Speaker." The parts list on page 15 contains some errors in the number sequence for the capacitors. The following parts list is the proper one for the schematic diagram shown in Figure 1 of the article.

I apologize for the frustration and disappointment experienced by those of you who constructed the speaker amp with the original parts list.

Parts List

Item	Description	Radio Shack#
B1	9 Volt Batt.	272-1022
C1	10uF,Nonpolar	272-999
C2	-not used-	——
C3	.01 uF Cap	272-1065
C4,C6	10uF Cap	272-1025
C5	100uF Cap	272-1044
C7	220uF Cap	272-1029
IC1	LM386 Amp	276-1731
R1	Trimpot	271-218
SP1	Speaker	40-1250
SW1	DPDT Switch	275-614
	Miscellaneous	
–	Batt. Clip	270-326
–	Batt. Plug	270-325
–	IC Socket	276-1995
–	PC Board	276-168
–	Wire,screws	

600XL Monitor Outputs

by Don Neff

The Project

The inexpensive Atari 600XL computer is often maligned as being inferior to its brother, the 800XL. In reality, the 600XL is a stripped-down 800XL which can easily be returned to 800XL status. The most obvious differences between these two computers are the 600XL's smaller memory bank and lack of video/audio monitor outputs. This article tells you how to add the missing monitor outputs so you are no longer forced to use a TV as a monitor.

When Atari first designed the 600XL, they intended it to have a monitor plug in addition to the RF modulator, just like the 800XL. Later, they changed their mind and supplied only the TV RF modulator to keep their costs down. Luckily for us, they didn't modify their original circuit board design. Instead, they just didn't install the components which are needed to create the monitor signals. The original copper traces are still on the circuit board waiting for you to install the necessary components.

Opening Your 600XL

Gently remove the top of your 600XL and carefully unplug the keyboard from the mother board. In the front, right corner of the motherboard you'll find the part number and revision number for your board. They should read:

P/N:150600008
REV 8A 600XL

If your numbers are different than these, you may still be able to add this circuit if your board contains the unused circuit traces described here.

Take the upper shield off the motherboard by twisting the mounting tabs with small pliers. Remove the mother board by unscrewing the two mounting screws and firmly lifting the front of the motherboard while prying the case away from the joystick ports. Remove the shield from the bottom of the motherboard and set everything, except the motherboard, out of the way.

Look at the rear left quarter of the top of the motherboard. To the left of the TV modulator, and behind U19 (a CD4050 chip), you should see a section of circuit board which is missing some components. The most obvious of the missing components are transistors Q7, Q8, and Q9. If you do not have this area on your motherboard, you can not make this modification. You will also notice an area of missing components (Q5, U24, etc.) located between the clock crystal and the color adjustment pot. Do not confuse this area with the one we need.

Transistors Q7-Q9 were to be the color amps which would have supplied a signal to a monitor jack to have been located where the channel select switch now resides instead. We are going to install the missing components to create a circuit similar to Figure 1. The finished circuit will provide the following output signals to your monitor:

Audio
Comp. Luminance
Comp. Chroma
Comp. Video

Installing the Parts

Make sure you understand the resistor color code so you don't install any of the resistors in wrong locations. I suggest you pick up Radio Shack's pocket

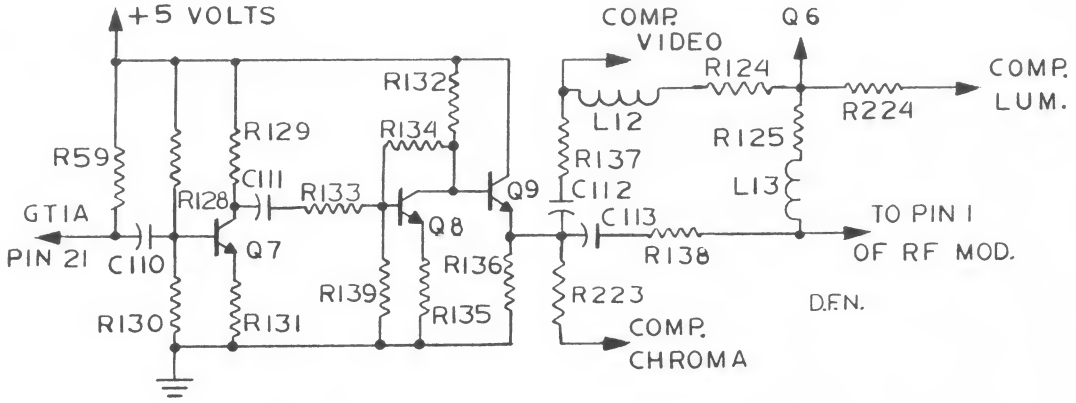

FIGURE 1

color code guide (RS 271-1210) to be safe. Almost all the resistors are used for transistor bias and a misplaced resistor can keep the circuit from working. If your finished project doesn't have a crisp, bright display, you should recheck all your resistor values.

Install all of the resistors and capacitors before installing the transistors. This will prevent damage to the transistors by the heat of soldering other components.

Notice most of the component numbers on the board are to the right of the holes they correspond to, when viewed from the front of the board. Mount the components according to the numbers printed on your board instead of the numbers shown in Figure 1. Your actual circuit may be slightly different than Figure 1, since Atari often used several variations of the same circuit.

C110 and R57 may already be installed on your board, along with some of the other parts, depending on when and where it was assembled.
L12 is a small coil which is not easily obtainable. Make a jumper from a piece of resistor lead and install it in place of L12.

When all other components have been soldered in place, you may install transistors Q7, Q8, Q9 using Figure 2 as an orientation guide. Notice that the transistor cases are the same shape as their outline on the circuit board and install them accordingly.

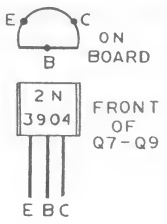

FIGURE 2

Gently bend the transistor leads with small needle-nose pliers to line them up with their appropriate mounting holes. Do not heat any transistor lead for more than four seconds when soldering them in place.

Cables

Cut one of the two plugs off of each of the four cables. Prepare the cut end of the cables by stripping and tinning the wires.

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I removed my TV modulator and used the resulting hole in the case to pass the four cables through the computer case. I used the ground plane beneath the modulator as the attachment point for the shields of the four cables. If you choose to retain the RF modulator, you'll have to make an extra hole in your plastic case and metal shield to accommodate the new cables.

Pass the cables through the hole in the case before soldering them in place on the circuit board. Select a grounding point and solder the shields of all four cables to this point.

Audio Output

The audio signal can be picked up at the right corner of the channel select switch as shown in Figure 3. Solder the center lead of one of the four cables at this point. Label the plug of this cable as the audio plug. This audio signal can be fed to your monitor, stereo, or auxiliary amplifier.

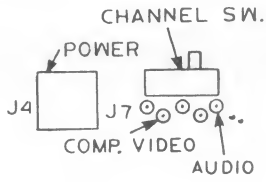

FIGURE 3

Composite Video

To the left of the audio connection, near the left corner of the channel select switch, are two more solder pads, as shown in Figure 3. One of these pads has a thin trace running over to R137 and the jumper you installed in place of L12. This is the pad which has the composite video (combined chroma and luminance) signal. Solder the center lead of one of the cables to this solder pad. Label the plug on this cable as the composite video plug.

Composite Luminance

Label one of the plugs as the luminance (pixel brightness) plug. Solder resistor R224 to the center lead at the other end of this cable. Cover the exposed connection and leads of the resistor with tubing or electrical tape to avoid short circuits with other wires. Leave enough of the free end of the resistor lead exposed to make a solder connection to the luminance circuit.

The luminance signal comes from the emitter of Q6 and can best be picked up at the junction of R124 and R125, as shown in Figure 1. Locate R124 and R125 on the circuit board (near the jumper you installed for L12) and use a VOM to determine which lead of R124 is connected to R125. That lead of R124 is the attachment point for R224 (on the luminance cable). Loop the free lead of R224 around the lead of R124 (which connects to R125) and solder them together.

Composite Chroma

Label one of the plugs as the chroma (pixel color) plug. Solder resistor R223 to the center lead at the other end of this cable. Cover the exposed connection and leads of the resistor with tubing or electrical tape to avoid short circuits with other wires. Leave enough of the free end of the resistor lead exposed to make a solder connection to the chroma circuit.

The chroma signal comes from the emitter of Q9 and can best be picked up at R136, as shown in Figure 1. Locate R136 on the circuit board (near the jumper you installed for L12) and determine which end is grounded and which is not. The ungrounded lead of R136 is the attachment point for R223 (on the chroma cable). Loop the free lead of R223 around the ungrounded lead of R136 and solder them together.

Monitor Connections

All of the input jacks on your monitor should have an identifying label near them. If they don't, refer to your owner's manual for their function and label them yourself.

Connect the audio plug to the audio jack of your monitor. The cables specified in the parts list have standard phono plugs attached to them. If your monitor uses a phone jack for its audio input, you'll have to change the audio cable plug or use a phono-to-phone plug adaptor (RS# 274-320 or 274-359).

If your monitor offers you a choice between using video input or split chroma/luminance input, always use the split chroma/luminance inputs to get the best screen display. The composite video signal is a mixture of the chroma and luminance signals. This mixture of signals must be separated by the monitor before the signals can be used to create the screen display. The separation process is not always successful and the resulting screen display is often fuzzy and dull. The split chroma/luminance signals provide a sharp, colorful screen display, second only to an RGB or TTL monitor (neither are used in the Atari 8-bit world).

If your monitor offers only a composite video input,

you are going to have to accept the fact that your screen display will not be sharp. In fact, the fuzzy display of a TV, when used as a monitor, is a result of the composite video signal from the RF modulator. If you're using your computer for wordprocessing, this fuzziness can be hard on your eyes. However, when wordprocessing, or in other applications where your don't mind a monochrome display, you can plug the luminance plug into your video jack and have a very sharp display.

Color Adjustment

Boot your computer with Basic and get a clear screen with the "READY" prompt displayed. Set the color controls on your monitor at their midpoint of travel. Adjust the color pot, R43 (lower left corner of the circuit board), to obtain a deep blue screen with bright white letters. If the letters are slightly blue, you have turned R43 too far.

Once the color has been adjusted to suit your tastes, your can reassemble the console and enjoy your improved screen display.

Parts List

Number	Part	Radio Shack #
–	4 Cables	42-2309
C110,113	100pf cap	272-123
C111	4.7pf cap	272-120
C112	.001uf	272-126
L12	Jumper	—
Q7,8,9	MPS3904	276-2016
R57,129, 131,132	1K ohms	271-1321
R124,136, 137,223,224	100 ohms	271-1311
R128*	4.7k ohms*	271-030
R128*	6.2k ohms*	271-025
R133	3.3k ohms	271-1328
R134	10k ohms	271-1325
R135	220 ohms	271-1313
R138	3k ohms	271-1328
R139	4.7k ohms	271-1330

* Connect in series to form R128

Disktool Modification

by David Bryant (GKAUG)

Here is some information on how to modify the program DISKTOOL REV 3 from *The ANALOG Compendium.* The modifications allow you to access the extra sectors of an ATARI DOS 2.5 diskette, all the way to sector 1040. Just type in the first listing and save to disk using the command.

```
LIST "D:DISKTOOL.LST"
```

Load the original listing #5 and merge the modifications by typing:

```
ENTER "D:DISKTOOL.LST"
```

Now SAVE the modified program:

```
SAVE "D:DSKTOOL.PT2"
```

There are also modifications to the basic program MAKEAUTO.BAS that creates an AUTORUN.SYS that will reserve low memory & disable the break key like the original, but also runs the first DISKTOOL basic program (be sure it has the name DSKTOOL.PT1). There are changes to the DATA statements in listing #1. Just type the new listing for MAKEAUTO.BAS. Then SAVE and RUN it.

You should now have five programs on your disk.

AUTORUN.SYS (modified)
DSKTOOL.PT1 (not modified)
DSKTOOL.PT2 (modified for DOS 2.5)
MAKEAUTO.BAS (modified)
DISKTOOL.LST (new modifications)

Boot the disk with Basic and DISKTOOL 3.0 will autoload for you.

[Editor's Note: DiskTool and the files for doing this modification may be downloaded from the Treasure CheST BBS]

Modifications to be placed in DISKTOOL.LST

```
460 REM * CK SECNUM LIMITS <1 >1040 *
475 SECNUM=VAL(A):IF SECNUM<1 OR SECNUM>1040 THEN ?
"    INVALID SECTOR-RANGE IS (1-1040)":POP:GOTO PROCINP
530 REM * ROLL SECTOR NUM TO 1 IF *
550 IF SECNUM>1040 THEN SECNUM=1
570 REM * ROLL SECTOR NUM TO 1040 *
590 IF SECNUM<1 THEN SECNUM=1040
880 IF PEEK(ERRFLG)=138 THEN ? "DRIVE ";DRIVE;" DOES NOT
RESPOND! "
881 IF PEEK(ERRFLG) THEN ? "CAN'T READ
SECTOR";SECNUM;" ($";HEXREP$;")":POKE ERRFLG,0:GOTO
PROCINP
882 REM
883 IF SECNUM>1024 THEN ? " DOS 2.5 SECTOR NOT IN USE ":?
" SECTOR==>";SECNUM;" ($";HEXREP$;")"
884 IF SECNUM>1024 THEN GOTO PROCINP
885 REM
886 IF SECNUM=360 THEN ? "VTOC SECTOR1=>360 ($0168)";:?
"CREATED DOS ";PEEK(CASBUF):? "FREE SECTORS=>";
887 IF SECNUM=360 THEN ? PEEK(CASBUF+3)+
PEEK(CASBUF+4)*256:GOTO PROCINP
888 IF SECNUM=1024 THEN ? "VTOC SECTOR2=>1024($0400)";:? "
DOS => 2.5":? "FREE SECTORS=>";
889 IF SECNUM=1024 THEN ? PEEK(CASBUF+122)+
PEEK(CASBUF+123)*256:GOTO PROCINP
890 IF SECNUM<369 AND SECNUM>360 THEN ? "  DIRECTORY
SECTOR ";SECNUM;" ($";HEXREP$;")":GOTO PROCINP
```

Modified Listing for MAKEAUTO.BAS

```
10 GRAPHICS 2+16
15 ? #6;" ++++++++++++++++++"
20 ? #6;" +  ANALOG 400/800  +"
25 ? #6;" +  DSKTOOL.RV3     +"
30 ? #6;" +    autorun.sys   +"
35 ? #6;" +  CREATOR PROG    +"
40 ? #6;" +       modified   +"
45 ? #6;" +    FOR DOS 2.5   +"
50 ? #6;" ++++++++++++++++++"
55 ? #6;" hit any key to":? #6;" create AUTORUN.SYS":? #6;"  file"
60 OPEN #1,4,0,"K:"
65 GET #1,A
70 CLOSE #1
75 ? #6;"  creating file"
```

```
80 OPEN #1,8,0,"D:AUTORUN.SYS"
85 PUT #1,255:REM HEADER $FF
90 PUT #1,255:REM HEADER $FF
100 PUT #1,0:REM LOAD START LSB $00
105 PUT #1,6:REM LOAD START MSB $06
110 PUT #1,156:REM LOAD END  LSB $4A
115 PUT #1,6:REM LOAD END  MSB $06
120 READ A:IF A=999 THEN GOTO 140
123 REM ** NOW PUT OUT REST OF PROG **
125 PUT #1,A
130 GOTO 120
140 CLOSE #1
160 POSITION 3,10:? #6;" FILE WRITTEN"
170 GOTO 170
1000 DATA 169,196,141,197,2,24,173,231,2,105,184,141,231,2,173,
     232,2
1010 DATA 105,11,141,232,2,169,0,133,8,32,78,6,216,24,173,48,2,
     105,4
1020 DATA 133,204,173,49,2,105,0,133,205,24,160,0,177,204,105,162,
     133
1030 DATA 212,160,1,177,204,105,0,133,213
1040 DATA 160,32,185,125,6,145,212,136,208,248,169,13,141,74,3,96
1050 DATA 120,173,22,2,141,111,6,173,23,2,141,112,6
1060 DATA 169,103,141,22,2,169,6,141,23,2,88,96,72,173,14,210,16,4
1070 DATA 104,76,110,6
1080 DATA 169,127,141,14,210,165,16,141,14,210,104,64
1090 DATA 0,48,47,43,37,0,24,20,18,12,17,18,26,50,53,46,2
1100 DATA 36,17,26,36,51,43,52,47,47,44,14,48,52,17,2
1110 DATA 226,2,227,2,0,6,999
2000 REM ****************************
2010 REM * END AUTORUN.SYS *
2020 REM *    LOADER PROG    *
2030 REM ****************************
```


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Bits and Pieces

FROM THE

Battle Creek Atari User Group

STATE OF THE CLUB

The club had their meeting on Jan. 14. This was the meeting to elect new officers and we had four people show!! Noone wanted to take an officer position and I declined to run again. As of now there is no president for the club. If the club is to continue then we definitely need more people to get involved!

I don't know if we will have a meeting in February. It is really up to you, the members. The attendance has never been great at our meetings. I almost dropped out of the club a year ago but was talked into becoming President. I reluctantly took the job and have tried to get things going, but the lack of support and interest has made it an uphill battle to say the least. Folks, this is your club. It has been said before that you get out of something what you put into it.

The club has failed for the following reasons.

The officers haven't done their jobs. The club should offer the members information on and assistance with their computers. Much of this information is in the club library in technical manuals and magazine articles, but the library only shows up at a meeting once in a while. The library should be available for people to check things out.

The disk librarian should write articles for the MAM magazine on what is new and of interest in the library so people will want to get the disks. The librarian should also provide a disk of the month which features new programs. But that has not happened!

The secretary should keep notes of the meetings and type up the notes to be published in the MAM each month. This has not happened either.

The membership/publicity chairman should send a news release to the area newspaper to announce our meetings. He should call members to see how they are doing, which would show our concern for them.

Another major failure has been the lack of a computer store in Battle Creek to steer people to the club. Most people in the area buy their equipment through the mail. This is their only real choice, unless they are willing to drive 100 miles!

I think this general lack of support from Atari is going to be the demise of the Atari Corporation. I feel there is terrible mismanagement in the company and that is why we don't have all those neat products that we have been hearing about. When I step my computer system up to a 16 or 32 bit system I will look at and compare all the available machines.

Atari needs to realize that their users will not be blindly loyal to them if they continue on the course that they have been following the past 2 years.

The club also needed a president that would rally the officers and the membership together behind him. This needs to be someone other than me. It seems no one wants the job. Without one person to act as a spokesman and coordinator, I suspect that the club will not be around much longer. If you, the members, want this club to continue then you need to show some interest.

I feel that the club offers the value of an outstanding newsletter, the chance to meet other users who can be a great help at times, and access to one of the best public domain libraries around. Do you want to give this up??? It is up to you.

Your Ex-President
Chuck Steele

[Editor's Note: It is both saddening and distressing for us to hear this news. We had approached BCAUG nearly two months ago to do a "MAM Spotlight" on the past, present and future of their club. We sincerely hope that the club does not fail because when the indivual owners cease to support the Atari, who's left?]

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNER'S SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests. Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to: C.H.A.O.S., P.O. Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

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Elected and Appointed Officers of CHAOS

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8-bit Rep	Marvin Goldstein	332-4160
16-bit Rep	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
ST Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
XL/XE Libr		
Publ Libr	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646
Newsltr Coor	Rich Barnes	349-0513

President's Corner
by Leo Sell

Once again the inexorable villain Deadline bears down upon me. Time to take pen in hand (computer in fingers?) and write to you good folks of CHAOS.

First and foremost, next month (March) is election month. At this point I am undecided whether to run again. I have not been able to be as active as I would like, and the current state of Atari computing does get discouraging. On the other hand, it is important to have someone leading who tries to see the bigger picture and keep things as positive as possible. Two of my firmest beliefs are that the ST owners and the 8-bit owners *must not separate*. Again and again CHAOS has stated its position that we are stronger together than we are apart. Secondly, the President must be willing to leave things undone if no one will do them. Too many officers burn themselves out trying to do jobs that no one can be found to do. My personal philosophy is that if it is important enough to someone, they will volunteer.

What all of this boils down to is this: no matter who

runs for President of CHAOS, they should continue these policies. I urge you to elect only a person who commits to them.

Other offices we will elect to are Vice President (nominee likely needed), Secretary-Treasurer (not sure), 16bit Representative (at ST SIG meeting), and 8bit Representative. The election will be our annual business meeting and will replace most of the 8bit Meeting. ST owners especially need to be there and make your voices heard (not to mention your willingness to run for office).

Another consideration as you think of running for office, or of nominating someone, is that the officers of CHAOS must have basic business sense. Our continuing expenses at this time are around $250 per month - $3000 per year. Let me give you a thumbnail sketch of our expenses.

Yearly per member expenses:

Free Disk	$1.00	
Newsletter	9.60	
Disk Catalog	1.50	
Renewal Costs	1.00	
Total	$13.10	(Rounds to $1.00 per month per member)

Monthly operational expenses:

PC Pursuit	$25.00
Reimbursements	20.00
BBS Phone	11.00
Photocopying	5.00
Equipment Maintenence	15.00
Printing and Supplies	5.00
Exchange Newsletters	24.00
Subscriptions	5.00
Average Member expenses at $1 per member per month	140.00
	$250.00

As you can see, there is a fair amount of responsibility connected with running the club. If we begin to shrink, hard decisions will have to be made. Make certain that people are elected that can make those decisions.

On other fronts, we still need someone to handle publicity for the club. The job is simple, write Public Service Announcements, and other forms and submit them to the media each month. Perhaps see that flyers are placed in key locations as well.

Speaking of being involved. I have rarely been so energized about Atari and CHAOS computing as I was this past December and January, dealing with three new and *enthusiastic* volunteers for 8-bit Library assistance. A big thanks for volunteering and helping out goes to Joel Kilgore, Jim Lathrop, and Chuck Bailey. They bring a lot of ideas and willingness to the job and I am pleased as punch to have them. THANKS GUYS!!!

I also want to wish the former 8-bit Librarian, Bill Johnson, the best. Thanks for all of your hard work. Looks like it took 3 people to replace you <*>.

Until March and Springtime in Atari.

CHAOS 8bit Meeting Minutes
by Gary Ferris, Secretary/Treasurer

The January meeting was brought to order with the normal free for all discussion. Bill Johnson was applauded for the fine job he had done with the library while he was in charge. Chuck Bailey, Joel Kilgore and Jim Lathrop were introuduced as the new library team.

Questions were asked about the 8-bit emulator for the ST and John Nagy said that the author expects to have a new improved version ready in about 2 months. It was agreed that it probably would not be fast enough to totally replace an actual 8-bit machine.

The new year is supposed to be a time of reflection and a time of change. In this spirit, we have tried to introduce new features which will make the meetings more enjoyable and more helpful to the current membership. In the beginning, most members were the type who enjoyed diving deep into the hardware and software, tearing them apart to see how and why they operated as they did. As prices came down dramatically it opened the computer world to a whole new generation of user. These are the people that plug it in, look at a the manuals, and then say 'HUH?'. To better serve this group, we have started a new educational segment in each meeting, where we will talk about the basic operation of the computers and software. For February, look for *telecommunications* to be the focus of the *how-to* segment.

Two other new features are the Video Spotlight, where we will have interviews and features about businesses and people who are important to the Atari user in this area. Also we will have a Rental Disk of the Month courtesy of Computer Concepts,

which will allow us to see new software for the Atari that many of us would not see without purchasing. CC is offering a 10% discount to CHAOS members.

Don't forget that Officer Elections are coming up in March. If you wish to nominate someone or run yourself for any office, please let us know before then.

The treasury now stands at $981.70.

Disk Library News

The Library Rental offer has been going well for all involved. The rate has been adjusted due to the explosion of ST disks into the library. Now, $65 rents the 8bit library (about 400 disk sides including *complete* archives of ANTIC and ANALOG!!), $85 rents the 135 disk set of ST disks, and $120 rents *both*. (Deposit required.) These are completely organized and tested disks, with a copy of the library catalog (48 pages!). Contact CHAOS for more information through Sally Nagy, (517)484-1976, or on the BBS.

ST Library

by Sally Nagy

At our February meeting, we will focus on Educational and Children's Programs available for the ST. We will look at "Winnie The Pooh", "Donald Duck's Playground", "Read and Rhyme", and others.

In our Public Domain ST Library, we have many new files. The Education Section is completely reworked. The Profession Gem Articles (they had examples in 'C') were removed from this section and put in the Language Section of Utilities, UTILITIES B21 -- Tim Oren GEM Tutorials and other 'C' files.

On Education Disk E1 we have BARNYARD.2, which is a concentration game for preschool children. It has pictures of the different animals with their names. They are behind different gates. BARNYARD, the original one is good for school age children who can read. MATCHING is similar to the other ones BUT has a new feature, it uses speech. BIBLE.PRG is an Old and New Testament Concentration game.

Education Disk E2 features SCIENCE programs. GALAXY.PRG where you design your own galaxy. STAR.TTP or STARCHART where you can view the stars. LIFE.PRG looks at how fast cells generate. SUN_MOON.PRG to locate the SUN, MOON, and more.

Education Disk E3 has different text files to help you learn how to master the ST. ST_INTRO.PRG a excellant program to learn how to operate GEM Windows. DESKTIPS and many more files.

Education Disk E4 has GFA Basic programs with runtime program; MATH.BAS which prints out Math Problems, NUMCNTV.BAS converts numbers 1 to one, SHAPES.BAS has you match the shapes. You have to name the states in STATES.BAS, and QUIZZ.BAS gives you a quiz. STATES.PRG helps you learn about the States and Capitols. STSEARCH.PRG creates word search puzzles. GUESSNUM.PRG is a 'guess the number the computer is thinking of' game. USCONSTI.TXT is a text file of the US Constitution. SPELLER.PRG asks you to spell the name of the picture it shows and WORDPIC.PRG asks which word goes with which picture.

Education Disk E5 has KIDMIXUP.PRG where picture stories are put in order. In KIDPUZZL.PRG you find the secret squares which reveals the puzzle. KIDS_ABC.PRG helps kids learn the ABCs. LEARNKBD.PRG is a program where you must find the keys and beat the clock. With SQUARES.PRG, you put the ABCs in order.

Education Disk E6 has KIDMUSIC.PRG, where you select a pic and it plays a tune. KIDNOTES.PRG allows selecting pics and piano keys that are highlighted. KIDPIANO.PRG plays notes on either a piano or an organ. KIDPOTAT.PRG designs or matchs POTATO HEADS. With KIDSONG1.PRG or MAKIN' AIKEN design Aiken and listen to a song.

Education E7 features DOODLE2.PRG; DR. DOODLE, a drawing program; ELECTPAD.PRG, another drawing program; KIDGRAPH.PRG where you fill in squares (14 colors); KIDGRID1.PRG -- fill in grid, 6 colors; KIDGRID2.PRG -- fill in grid, 14 colors; and KIDSKETC.PRG an enchanced etch-a-sketch.

Other new disks this month include:
An excellent Music Studio player has been found and placed on all the Music disks. With this player you can determine the order the songs will be played and once selected you can then save these selections as an *album* to be played again and again.

Many new Spectra Pictures have been aquired. A new classification for pics was created : Pics A # = TINY, Degas, NeoChrome and Pics B # = Spectrum pictures.

Pics B1 has Bladesp1, Bladesp2, House, Magnum, Moonlite, Redarrow, Spec_01, Spec_02. Pics B2 has

Alf, Aztec, Finhorn5, Horses, Ninja, Portrait, Sanka, and Toucanbd. Pics B3 has (StarTrek -- new generation and others), Baktfutr, Mr_Spock, Newgenat, Newenter, Picard, LTData, Tasyar and Worf. Pics B4 has Apollo09, Apollo10, Apples, Dntlkbk, Earth1, Earth2 and Sabrejet. Pics B5 has CATS_01 through CATS_07.

Graphic Display 13 has demos of Extensor and Goldrunner. Graphic Display 14 has Aegis movies; Cartoon1, F_Castro, Headboom, Headroom, My_Logo, Volcano and Wartown. Graphic Display 15 has a demo of the Pirates of the Barbary Coast.

And last BUT not least some NEW GAMES!

Adventure Games A5 has HOUSE, the Phantom House, TAIPAN where you buy, borrow, trade or sell your merchandise, TRUCK where you drive a 10 wheel tractor trailer, and WORLD where you've landed upon a strange new world.

Thinking Games B8 has FV_GAME4 a checker game with graphics. LABY where you can create your own picture mazes. MAZEGEN a maze generator. MOUSETRAP a maze where the mouse is after the cheese. SCOREFOUR put four in a row. SENSORI a Simon game with music.

Thinking Games B9 has DRIVENTURE where you drive a car through a maze (some text). GUESS-IT.PRG a game similar to hangman – you fill in the missing letters. In MAXTOWR.BAS and TOWERS.BAS you put hoops on poles. MOTOR.PRG is a motorcycle similation. NIM.PRG makes you put on your thinking cap to play this one. STOCKS.PRG is a game of STOCKS AND BONDS.

Arcade Games C6 has DROIDLOW.PRG (Floyd the Droid) and G_RANGER.PRG (Galactic Ranger), two shoot 'em up games.

Monochrome Games E3 has AWARI.PRG an African game of beating sticks. BOUNCE.PRG where you must shoot the balls before they get you. ELIM.TOS is the ELIMINATION card game. JEOPARDY.PRG, with games 1-4, you MUST read the answers. LASERMON.PRG is LASER CHESS for Monochrome.

This assortment should keep you until next month. Until then happy computing!

The CHAOS Download

By John Nagy

Not a lot to report this month, except to invite all our readers and users to the next 8bit meeting of CHAOS (February, on the third Saturday morning) to get some behind-the-scenes info on how the system operates. We will finish the meeting with a tutorial on how to use the CHAOS BBS and how to navagate like a pro on most telecom systems.

Meantime, I'll see ya in CHAT at 517-371-1106... the CHAOS BBS!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

President's Report

by Jerry Cross

For those people who wanted to purchase a modem or disk drive, the order has been placed and with luck should be available at the next meeting. Please bring the rest of the money with you.

It's starting to sound more like GAG Inc. than a club, but I have a few other deals for you also. Time is running out on the group purchase of Antic disk magazines. I need to know *now* if you are interested. You can subscribe for one year for only $59.95 instead of the usual $79.95.

We also have a limited supply of disk storage cases for $5 each. These cases will hold 40 disks, and come in either 5-1/4 or 3-1/2 sizes. Contact one of the officers if you are interested.

Thanks to Rick Chevalier for donating a box of past Antic and Analog magazines to our library. These should help fill in some of the holes of missing issues. If any of you have some unwanted books or magazines, please donate them. In case you have not been to the bookstore lately, there are very few books for the Atari computers available. It would be nice to have a ready source of information for our members. Think about it!

Sy-Draft now has our entire disk library. If you can not make it to the meetings, stop by and buy disks there. The price is $2.50, and you must supply your own disk.

Thanks again to Mike Clayton for his demonstration at the last meeting. I have received a lot of good comments about his battleship game, and I will keep you informed about the progress.

For the next few months, I will be bringing modems

and computers to the Saturday workshops. If you are interested in learning about telecommunications, stop by. Matt Howe will be doing his usual Basic Classes, and we will have the usual assortment of computer addicts to help you with any problems you may have.

That's about it for this month. Don't forget that the February meeting will feature a swap meet. Bring in your old software/hardware and make some money.

Meeting dates:

February 10	General meeting (6:30)
February 27	Saturday Workshop (10:00am)
March 9	General Meeting (6:30)
March 26	Saturday Workshop (10:00am)

Meetings: Neithercut School, 2818 Crestbrook Drive
(near Hammerburg and Atherton)
Jerry Cross 736-4544
Facts BBS 736-3920

8bit Disk Library

by Ed Kalush

Well it is already Febuary. That leaves only about two more months of winter. Of course with all this cold weather we have a good reason to stay in and program, right ? Well maybe you can just buy more GAG disks and have lots of fun with the computer.

As promised there are several new disks this month. First, A new version of TEXTPRO (v1.2). This adds several features and auto help screens. As usual the docs are long and helpful. If you already have our TextPro disk bring it in for a replacement. If not [WHY!] you can purchase it for a mere $2.50 (a great bargain in my book)!

Next, there is Daisy Dot 2, an Epson printer utility. This is also a very nice program, though my Okidata won't work with it (hint, hint). It will print most anyway you would like. It also has alot of docs, utilities, and fonts. This is a two disk set (3-sides), still only $2.50.

A disk tutorial all about DOS. Now push a key and learn what each command is for. Great for new Atari owners.

A graphics disk is also added to the list. This shows some nice routines and is mostly in Basic. Be sure to look thru the code to see how they work.

Games, my favorite, will keep you occupied for many long hours. Creepy Caverns will taunt you, (and kill you), in many ways. For the car racers, another roadrace game to crash. Be careful and keep the rubber side down.

It is possible there will be more disks yet. I hope to complete a picture disk and maybe a couple more. Bring your change and help support the group. Also, Demos of your favorite programs are always welcome, and benefit our group greatly!! Just let an officer know and we will make time for you to show us.

I hope Cupid is busy and everyone gets shot. Even us old married people could use a booster now and then. Love is out to get you ! Until next month...

Live Long and Program

GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 in Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College campus. Dues are $20/yr.

GKAUG Minutes

The first meeting of the new year turned out rather well and most everyone had some input into the meeting. Thats what these meetings are all about.

Officers for this year are as follows:

President:	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President:	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer:	Dave Bryant	
Librarian:	Steven Buechler	
Archiver:	Dave Oldenburg	
ST Chairman:	Jim Zinky	
SysOp:	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616) 657-6106	

We spent part of the meeting discussing disk utilities and we will be making a composite disk of various programs that we discovered, as well as any programs that get on the BBS during the next couple weeks. Don't let the time schedule prevent you from offering a utility, it can always be added to the disk as we go along.

Included in our Feb. '88 disk will be: renumber, disk label, a stand along SpartaDOS copy program... Dave Oldenburg started assembling some of the programs at the meeting, and the disk could be done by Feb. 13th (our next scheduled meeting)...11:00am, no late sleepers in our group!

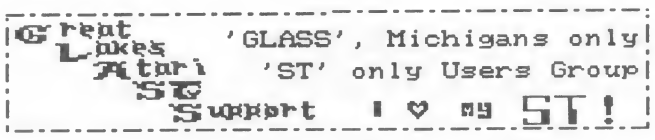
I am still trying to get a copy of the Genesee Atari Group's "Cute Label" program. I will check first with the WAUG! group. I haven't spotted it on any of the BBSes I use so far. It will make a nice addition for your printer.

The GKAUG BBS is running along nicely -- well, pretty good anyway. Got some crank callers that only know four-letter words, but they are easy to delete. Fred Farleigh and I are going to build a DC power supply for electrical backup during power failure, and may be able to expand the number of disk drives because of some interested and generous members. This should give us some additional room to store programs. We are still looking for an on-line text adventure for the board...maybe you know of one??

Dave Bryant's GKAUG BBS Instruction Manual is still available for those of you that show up at the meeting. It can be a handy item.

There has been talk of starting an ST Group. Jim Zinky will be heading an information gathering task force to find out who is interested in what...maybe sooon....maybe nooot so sooon!

Dave Oldenburg brought in a varied assortment of disks, and a note that the Analog Disk should be out again in Feb. '88...there seems to be some problem with printing. Everyone's subscription should be extended three months. Dave should have a new Utilities Disk available by next meeting. This could be another fun year!!



From The Desk Of The President

by Steve Mileski

The start of a new year brings renewed enthusiasm for improvements and a promise that this year will be even better than the last. Last year was good to GLASS and this year we hope to be even better.

January was also renewal time for all members. Of our thirty-five members from 1987, twenty rejoined. Hopefully most of the rest will return after a holiday hiatus. New members are also starting to find out that there are many benefits to being part of this user group.

At the February meeting we will approve (or disapprove) the people willing to accept the responsibility of steering our club through 1988. These people are volunteers and receive no compensation. I would like to take this time to thank them for their contribution to GLASS.

We have added a few new features to GLASS. I think the one most appreciate by everyone is the software giveaway. Every month we will give a quality piece of purchased software and a disk-of-the-month to members in attendance, determined by random drawing. This means one member will win the purchased software and one will win the disk-of-the-month. Names drawn but not in attendance will be posted in next month's newsletter to see what they missed by not coming. In February the purchased software will be Dungeon Master if available, or the newest version of Flash, if not. I purchased Dungeon Master about two weeks ago and can vouch for its quality and addictiveness, it has been hard to break away from it to take care of other computer business, thanks FTL Software!

I am also pleased with your support and donations to our *Donations to Public Domain Software Programmers* program. This is a good way to keep good PD software coming.

If you have a modem you can see a lot of GLASS people (including myself) on the Cosmic Stomper BBS (313)547-0440 at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud. Stop in and say hello.

Continue to look for excellent help from GLASS with Word Perfect and other word processors (thanks Paul Kubicz), GFA and other Basics (thanks Richard Staff), MIDI info. (thanks Mike Gillie), and new user training (thanks Steve Mileski..aw, gosh). If you need help with any hardware, software, or whatever, please, PLEASE, don't be embarrassed to ask.

A note to ST owners (yes, we are an Atari ST only club), if you are in Oakland, Macomb, or Wayne counties, do drop in and check us out! We have a lot of fun and learn much about our machines.

A note to GLASS members not currently receiving M.A.M., this is a fine publication which will only get better. Stay in touch with the rest of the Atari community (state wide!) with a club subscription, it's only fifty cents a month, payable through December! THANK YOU for being part of this fine club!

Meeting: March 2, 1988, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Micheal SW, Time: 6:30 p.m.

Elected officers:

George Nosky	President/Treasurer	(616)942-1527
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
C. Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373

Appointed Members at Large:

Gary Borysiak	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	(616)957-2646

President's Comments

By George Nosky

The above seven people make up your Board of Directors for 1988. I am sure I can speak for each board member when I say we will strive to make GRASS an integral part of you Atari activities. Don't hesitate to call any one of us if you have comments, ideas and/or criticism (hopefully constructive).

Now that the elections are over, the new team is ready to get organized. There was an organizational meeting at my home on January 20th. (Since I'm writing this in early January, Marvin Waid, our secretary, will have reported the minutes of the meeting to you at our February meeting.) The basis for our direction this year is the Questionnaire most of you mailed back to me last November. If you didn't mail yours, please do it now so we will have your input.

I summarized your responces and passed the results out at the January meeting. They will also be available at the next couple of meetings. I will publish some of the results here. The list of hardware and "who has what" is too long, therefore, you can pick it up at the meeting.

In answer to: 1) What do you use your system for? 31.1 % Word processing, 30.1% games, 13.9% programming, 6.7% telecommunications, 6.0% spread sheets, 5.5% miscellaneous.

2) Should GRASS support the ST? 45.2% yes, 3.2% no, 51.6% no opinion at this time.

3) Are you interested in a special interest group (SIG)? 58.1% yes, 41.9% no.

The majority of people were interested in BASIC programming. We will set up such a group and will keep you posted on the details.

I appreciate your support at the January meeting for a dues increase. We had a good turnout of members, and 100 percent of those present voted to increase the dues fro $5.00 per year to 12.40 per year. The total with the MAM 12-month subscription of $9.60 is $22. For those who were not at the meeting, details as to why an increase was necessary was included with your billing notice. Just a reminder – if I don't have your check by February 13th, your last issue of MAM will be the March issue. Blank disks and public domain disks remain at $.50 and $1.50 each. They are available to members at this price at the meetings. Prices are $1 and $5 respectively to non-members.

Our membership continues to grow. Bob Bulliment joined us at the January meeting. Welcome! One of my objectives is to provide a meeting format and atmosphere which will make it worthwhile for members to take their time to attend. I also hope this will attract new members. We have to do this to survive! You have been reading in MAM, and you know from your own experience, that the 8bit computer, especially the Atari, is not supported very well. The user groups are going to have to pick up the slack. To a great degree, if we band together, we can do this.

Yes, we certainly need the software companies and the peripheral manufacturers and Atari. We need and want the magazines (including Analog). However, there a lot of support we can provide ourselves -- with everyone's help. We now have a very comprehensive public domain library and a detailed catalog listing the library. Both of these have been available for a couple of months. If you don't have your catalog, please see me at the next meeting. Call me if it's impossible for you to get to a meeting. We also have in our group some very computer knowledgeable people. They are willing to help and do help. If you have a hardware or software problem, bring it to a meeting. Chances are someone else has had the problem and solved it.

I am getting favorable comments on MAM. Keep up the good work Bill and Pattie! Only one negative point – don't forget the 8bit people. We realize the STs are newer, etc., and there is more to write about. However, there are many 8bit people out there who need your support.

Since you receive your copy of MAM after our

meeting, we are going to have to put the meeting agenda in a month early. For example, the February issue (this issue) will have March's agenda. This way, you will know the agenda three weeks before the meeting instead of one week after. So -- on March 2nd, Joe Mann will demonstrate a Lotto program.

One last item. I am holding off sending $105 to Analog until we can determine if and when they will publish. I hope to see everyone at the March 2nd meeting.

President George Nosky
2440 Parkridge S.E.
Grand Rapids MI 49506
616 942 1527

Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville, MI 49333
(616)795-7373

January Meeting Minutes

Officers present: George Nosky, President, Chuck Baughman, Treasurer and Librarian.

The meeting started around 6:30 for the early bird computer nuts. (Meetings take place from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at Wyoming Public Library.)

Chuck Baughman demonstrated an adventure game and showed us what school teachers are really made of! Ha ha, he did a fine job.

Next, David Sheets showed Silicon Dreams. This was an adventure game, but it also had very nice graphics on the top half of the screen. Then he showed us Starfleet II. This was a space game where you command a starship. I didn't catch all of it, but it looked pretty good.

I noticed that Al Taylor, the SYSOP from was there checking things out. It was nice to see him and talk with him. Also later on, Steve Gilbert, the SYSOP from dropped in. I use my modem frequently, and it was nice to meet both these fellows in person.

Election of officers started at 7:30. Nominations were made by the nominating committee of Gary Heintz and Steve Gilbert. Being no objections, these choices were voted on and accepted as follows: George Nosky -- President, Gary Heinz -- Vice President, Marvin Waid -- Secretary, and Chuck Baughman – Librarian.

A board meeting was set up for the 20th of January at George Nosky's home to discuss future plans for the club.

A motion was made and supported to raise the club dues to $22.00 for the entire year. All members were in favor, none opposed, motion passed.

Towards the end of the meeting, George discussed the GRASS questionnaire. The most common use of the computers was word processing, with games coming in second. The questionnaire also showed that people are interested in Basic programming.

Well, I hope these minutes are readable to you folks, as this is my first time as Secretary. I will keep plugging away and try to do my best. Hope to see you at the next meeting which will be February 3, 1988.

Marvin Waid, Secretary

M.A.C.E. Journal

1988 MACE MEETING DATES

Officer Meeting	General Meeting
Feb. 5	Feb. 16
March 4	March 15
April 8	April 19
May 6	May 17
June 10	June 21

All General meetings are held in room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10 1/2 mile Rd and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.

Minute by Minute -- January Meeting

The January meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Tuesday, 1/19/88, at the Southfield Civic Center. President Don Neff called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm by announcing a "buy 4, get 5" disk special from the 8bit library. Commenting on the Michigan Atari Magazine, Don noted his general satisfaction with the publication and expressed his disappointment at the lack of articles submitted by MACE members.

Antic Magazine has offered a discount on 1 year subscriptions to MACE members. Subscribers to the "disk edition" can get $10 off the normal subscription rate if purchased through MACE.

United Computer of Canton, MI has offered to supply Epson LQ800 printers to MACE members at a group-purchase discounted rate. Normal list price is $269.00 plus tax, and if 10 printers are ordered by members they can be had for $250.00, tax included.

Don announced there are now 17 disks in the 8 bit library containing Print Shop icons. He also announced there will be a computer trade show at the Southgate Civic Center on Sunday, 1/24 at which MACE will be sharing a booth with WAUG! and MAM. The show runs from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

For a limited time only, MACE memberships and renewals are being made available at $35 for 2 years. This is 25% off the normal $20/year rate.

Member Mike Lechkun and his son, Bradley, demonstrated "an educational game" called Wizard of Wor. The educational aspect of the maze-based shoot-em-up apparently lies in the realm of hand/eye coordination. Mike and Bradley also demonstrated Earnie's Magic Shapes, a Sesame Street type game from CBS Software. Originally available on cartridge, it is now being released on disk by HiTech who now owns the rights to distribution. The game consists of pressing appropriate keys to indicate Yes/No while trying to match various objects of different shapes and sizes. Member Todd Meisner demonstrated Spectrum 512, a video display package that allows 512 colors simultaneously on an ST. Todd noted there can be up to 48 colors on a single line. Available from Antic.

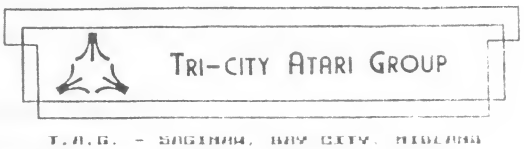
Don hosted a Question & Answer session. Most notably were questions regarding the status of Analog Magazine. Member Bob Retelle discussed relevant information which he found on Delphi indicating Analog had been purchased by Larry Flynt Publications. This move leads to speculation that there will be a significant improvement in distribution and advertising, while the original publishers can now concentrate more on content. The March issue is due near the end of January, and subscribers who have remaining issues due them are encouraged to write Analog to request their previous subscriptions be honored.

Journal Editor Pattie Snyder-Rayl asked for comments and opinions regarding the quality and content of Michigan Atari Magazine, to which she received a round of applause. Don re-stated his concern that MACE members need to submit articles for printing.

After intermission, the 8bit SIG met for a discussion and demonstration of using the Express terminal program by Keith Ledbetter. Michael Olin answered questions while running his Express/AMIS Simulator program (available in the library) in anticipation of MACE East going back online soon. Sharie Middlebrook then answered questions regarding MACE WeST.

The ST SIG meeting consisted of a demonstration of Dungeon Master, a new and long-awaited game from FTL. The game is a Dungeon and Dragons type game with superb sound and graphics. The next general membership meeting will be held on February 16.

Mike Olin, Recording Secretary



Next Meeting

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

January9, 1987 February 13, 1987

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8-bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Steve Volker	ST Disk Lib.	793-2955
George Stuart	News Letter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine. Support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You an get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8- bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

The President Speaks Out

Once again our meeting arrived before our newsletters, but I really don't think that we can blame MAM. The deadline for submissions is the 17th of the month. If you figure 2 weeks to put the magazine together, get it printed, and get it mailed, that puts you at the 1st of the month. And Pattie did mail the newsletters on the 4th of January (the earliest possible due to the holidays). We can't move our meeting to the third Saturday of the month, because then some of the meetings would fall after the due date for MAM. Sooo...here's my suggestion.

Let the meeting occur on the last Saturday before the 17th of the month. It'll always be the 2nd or 3rd Saturday, and will give the newsletter the best chance of getting here on time. Since the newsletter seems to show up around the 10th-15th of the month, we should be all right! Think about it, and I'll see you at the next meeting!

I would like to thank George Stuart for all of his help

the last couple of months. He's saved me quite a bit of time, and I sure hope that someone else steps in and fills the void that he'll be leaving! If you've got a modem, and would like to take a stab a being the next TAG 'feature writer', let me know at the next meeting.

Hot Flashes from the Future!

by George Stuart

The month of February brings our database coverage to a close, only this month we'll be featuring databases with all of the features that you could possibly want! On the ST side, Marty Schmidt will be demoing Regent Base. This powerful database allows you to set up the database the way you want, and when you're finished all of your selections are automatically placed on menus. The finished product will look like a programmer made a custom designed database just for your application! Come on in and check it out!

As I look forward to my transfer to Grand Haven in April, March will be my last month as the News Letter Editor. Sooo if some other brave soul would like to try his hand please step forward. P.S. Thanks for not Booing me.

Data Perfect is a top of the line data bases for the 8bit Atari and Char Davis will present a demo at the February meeting.

Data Perfect by LJK Enterprises has several features that you may be looking for in a data base, like a built in calculator, mailing labels, double density, two drives, a very flexible search routine and much more. All is not roses though so come and see if the benefits out weigh the bad.

Relics to Relish

If we would have had a monitor and drive at the last meeting you would have witnessed DataBase II performing some fairly quick multiple searches (remember this program IS written in Atari Basic!). You would also have seen DataBase II sort ascending or descending. But the most important thing you missed was the way this baby can PRINT your records. Yes this baby has formatted output using batch files. The formatted print routine is some what limited but does print strings, headings and 80 column output. I would highly recommend this program to someone who has a limited need for a data base.

Not only did we not have a monitor for the 8bit, but we had *two* for the ST! LeRoy Valley surprised us by bringing in a friend's Thompson monitor (model 4120). Thank you Rob Voss for the loan! This monitor comes with a custom cable for the ST and features a 14" screen as opposed to the conventional 12" screen on the Atari monitor. It also has standard video and audio in jacks, so you can connect it to your 8-bit computer, or even to your VCR! All this for about $80.00 less than the Atari monitor. The resolution is about equal to the ST monitor (the current one, not the original one).

DBMaster One was the featured ST program. LeRoy Valley demoed this and even created an impromptu database per the clubs suggestions. DBMaster One is a very simple database comprised of two seperate programs – MAKEONE.PRG and USEONE.PRG. To create a new database, run MAKEONE and set up the desired format -- everything is point and click! When you're finished creating, just run USEONE and start adding information to your database. Nothing could be easier. You can also store multiple report forms for each database and select the one you need.

The only serious drawback of the program is the limitations you have when creating reports. Data can only be displayed using the four forms in the program, and oftentimes these forms aren't quite right. For free though, what do you expect?

The meeting concluded with LeRoy showing us ten new PD ST disks and everybody jumping up to copy them.

Expiration notice

Check the label on your MAM. If it says "LAST ISSUE" next to the date, then you need to renew. Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive NO more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

8-bit Equipment Volunteers

George Stuart	Disk Drive
Char Davis	Monitor
Club	800XL

ST Equipment Volunteers

Bryant LeFreniere	Monitor
Al Ferrio	520ST & Disk Drive
Marty Schmidt	Hard Drive

Once again, a big *thanks* to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. *Please,* if you're going to be late, or can't make it, *call!!* It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP

How to Join Come to a meeting! WAUG! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm. Meetings are held in Room 2302 of the University of Michigan School of Education, located on the corner of South and East University in Ann Arbor. Or send a check for $10, payable to Bob Carlini (our Treasurer), to the WAUG! mailing address. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.

List of Future WAUG! Activities
Feb. 9: Games Night
Mar. 8: Business Applications
Apr. 12: Music
May 10: "Hack and Slash"
Jun. 14: Elections/Flea Market
No meetings held in July and August

From the Prez...

The next meeting of WAUG! will feature games for both the ST and 8 bit computers, a topic that I am not particularly adept or comfortable with, so I am going to depend a great deal on the skills and talents of other members of this club. Fortunately there are a lot of people "out there" who have invested much time and effort in this aspect of their adventures with computers so I am expecting there will be something for everybody to enjoy. I am especially hoping to see some "homespun" software, so if you have written something you are proud of *please do bring it to show us!*

How many of you remember when the first video games came out? Boy, would I like to have all the quarters back that I dropped into the Pong coin slide! Little did I realize at the time that I, like millions of others, was fanning a spark that would turn into such a huge flame! And I still get a charge out of the Big Blue fans who turn up their noses when they hear the word "Atari" and call it "a game machine!" Considering that graphics is just about the hardest thing to do on any computer, and that games *are* graphics, making such a comment is truly a compliment.

Bring your best competitive spirit with you when you come to this meeting! Whether we are zapping alien critters, rescuing fair maidens from dragons, battling wizards or mining for smithore, I am sure we will all have fun!

WAUG! General Meeting, January 12, 1987

This was the Telecommunications meeting, so we started off with demos of a couple public domain terminal programs.

First, Bruce Urbanski showed Vanterm, which is a nice GEM-based, Flash-like program that has additional features such as Y-modem, some ARC functions, DOS functions, and the ability to run TOS programs from within Vanterm. Bruce, being the ST librarian also mentioned other terminal programs available in the library, such as Solaterm (with GFA source code), Bordterm (that talks), and Access (VT 52 emulator). There is also now a PD player for Music Studio files.

Second, Mike Pieronek showed off Amodem 7.5, which is written in Basic and can be used with Sparta-Dos. Although written in Basic, all the time-critical functions are machine language routines, and some nice features include a type-ahead option, up to 9600 baud, X-modem CRC and batch Y-modem. The library disk with this also has all the handlers for whatever modem you may be using (SX212!) and the latest version of the Express terminal program.

Next, Bill Rayl demonstrated BB/ST, which is a highly configurable bulletin board system from QMI for the ST. This BBS has many features such as running external TOS programs, the option of reading messages by subject (tree) or linearly, downloading just one file from an ARChive, and many others. However, the current version apparently has some bugs that need fixing before reliability could be considered good.

After these demos Howard Chu treated us to a lot of inside info on the Merit network, which allows callers from many Michigan locations to call BBS's local to Ann Arbor as a local phone call. Thank you, Howard! Finally, thanks to Mike Ranger, WAUG now has a magazine library with *many* back issues of many Atari magazines.

Do you have any computer equipment just gathering dust? Has your spouse been complaining about the lack of space in the "computer room?" Perhaps you have some software you're no longer interested in, but haven't thought what to do with it?

If so, then **Michigan Atari Magazine Classified Ads** are for you!! Members of the user groups in MAM may place a classified ad for no charge. For those computer enthusiasts who don't belong to a user group, the fee is $1.50 for the first 15 words, and 5 cents for each word after that.

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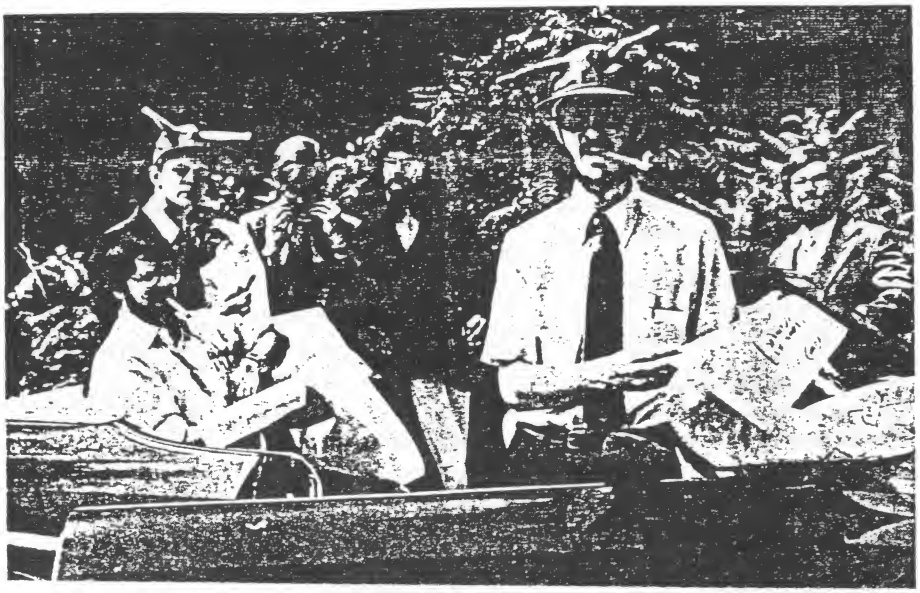

The staff of the Famous Programmers' School includes some of the best known names in the microcomputing field. From left to right: **Bennett Lisp** (with cigar), **Rod Snobol** (with feelers), **Bruce Fortran** (eating cigar), **John Forth** (natty attire), **Ignatious 'Call Me Blaise' Pascal** (feelers, cigar and flowchart), and the immortal **Red Basic** (smug look).

We apologize for the poor picture quality, but what do you expect? We're a programming school, not a photography studio!

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Many of our students have gone on to achieve great success in all fields of programming. One former student developed the concept of the personalized form letter. Does the phrase, "Dear Mr. (insert name), You may already be a winner!" sound familiar? Another student writes, "After only five lessons I sold a 'My Most Unforgettable Program' article to Corrosive Computing Magazine."

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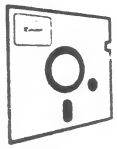

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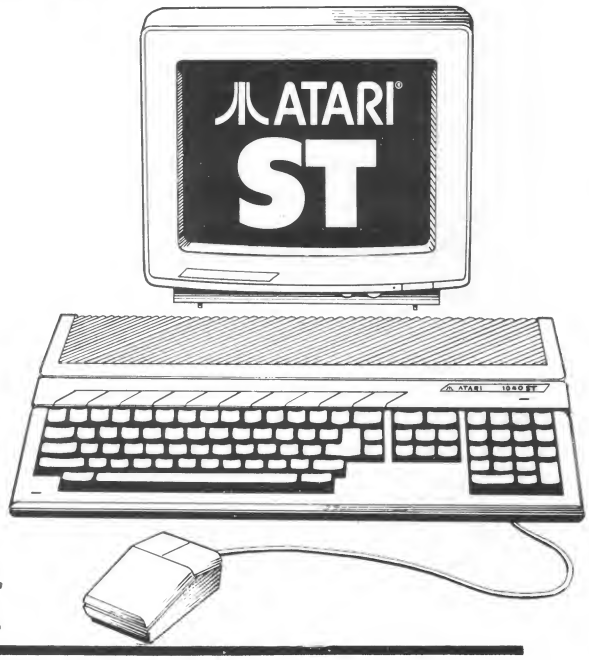

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MEMBERSHIP: Membership in M.A.C.E. cost $20 for 12 months, or $35 for 24 months (make checks payable to M.A.C.E.). This membership includes all family members living at your address.

MEETINGS: Regular monthly meetings are held at 7:30pm, on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. We meet in room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center, Evergreen and 10 1/2 mile road, Southfield, michigan. Typical meeting programs consist of XL/XE and ST demos, tutorials and interesting group discussions on any Atari subject.

DISK LIBRARIES: Our ST library contains more than 170 disks and is growing rapidly.

We have one of the largest XL/XE disk libraries in the world (over 500 disks!) which includes one of the largest collections of Print Shop icons (17 disks) and utilities. A complete catalog of this library is available on disk for $2.

Our disks sell for $5.00 each and may be purchased at any meeting or ordered through the mail. You must be a MACE member to purchase disks from us, we do not sell to nonmembers.

MACE JOURNAL: Our club magazine, "THE MACE JOURNAL", is one of the most widely read and quoted Atari related publications available. In fact, we are proud to be one of the clubs selected by Unicorn Publications for inclusion in their fine magazine, "MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE". By special arrangement with Unicorn, our members now receive a free subscription ($18 value) to this magazine with their $20 MACE membership! Each month the magazine features informative Atari articles, interviews, reviews, happenings, news items, hardware and software tips, as well as club news from 9 Michigan Atari user groups.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: We operate 3 BBS's for general public use. Our main board, MACE West (582-0657, ASCII only), operates at 300/1200/2400 baud and supports both 8-bit and 16-bit users. MACE East (978-1685) operates at 300/1200 baud and supports mainly 8-bit users, although 16-bit users are welcomed too. Our south board (676-4660, ASCII only) operates at 300/1200 baud and supports both 8-bit and 16-bit users. All of the MACE boards have message bases which are open to public use and viewing.

COMPUTER HELP: MACE has many members who are experts in Atari computers and programs. No matter what type of Atari related questions you have, we probably have several members who can answer them at our meetings.

If you are a new user who just entered the world of computers, we can help you get started and guide you as you progess. If enough new users are interested, we will sponsor classes to teach you how to use your Atari comfortably.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG): Ocassionally a group of members gather together to share knowledge and experiences in a common interest. These special interest groups form to learn more about topics such as: Telecommunications, Programming Languages, Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Music, etc. MACE will form a SIG for almost any Atari computer subject, if enough members express an interest in supporting the subject.

GROUP PURCHASES: Manufacturers of Atari related items often offer discounts to MACE for large quantity group purchases. These discounts are passed on to our members who take part in these group purchases. Items we have saved money on as a group include: 2400 Baud Modems, Disk drives, Magazine subscriptions, etc.

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Michigan Atari Magazine

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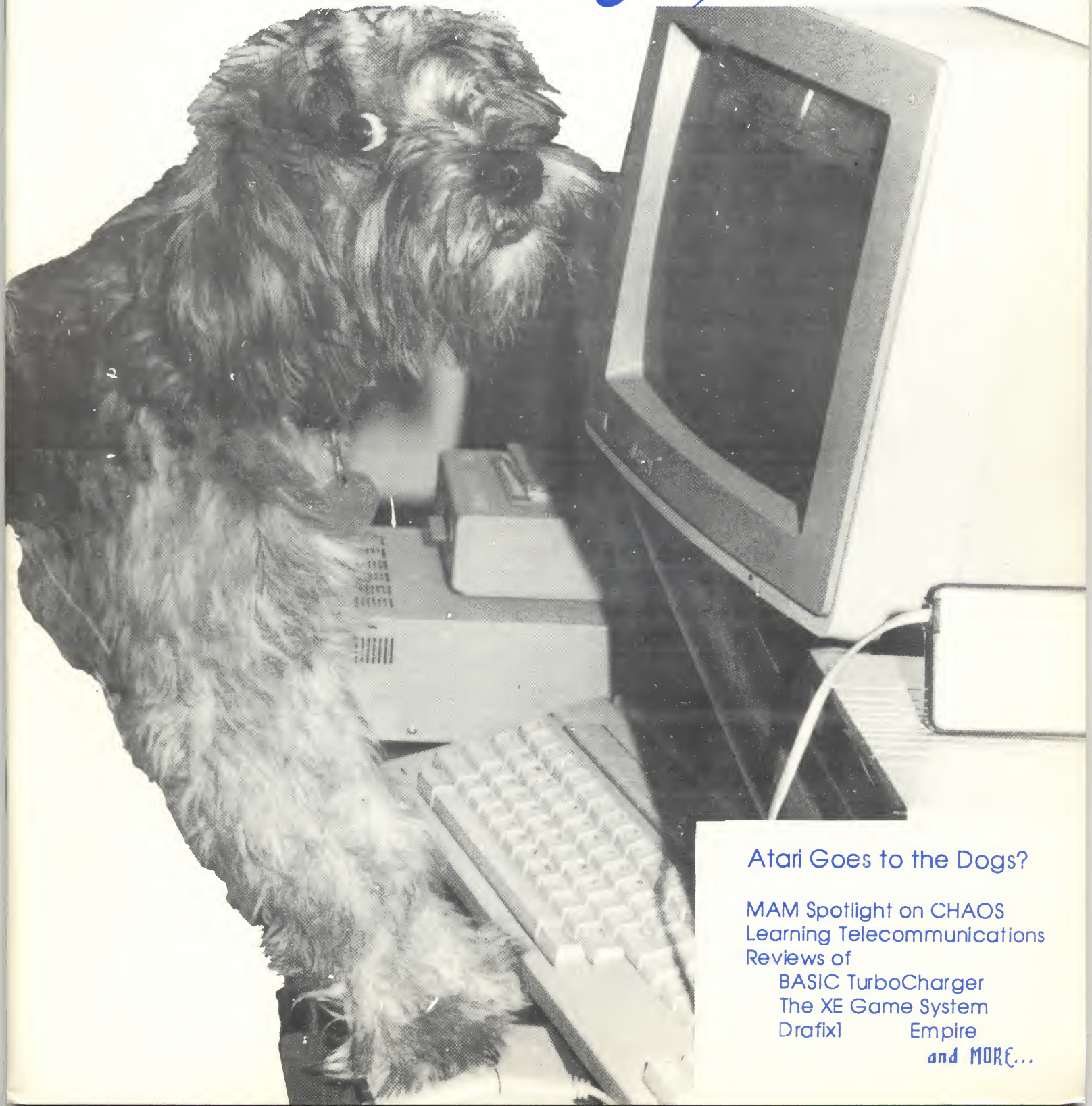
Vol. 3 No. 3
March 1988



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MAM this Month

Vol. 3, No. 3
March 1988

Features

Letters to the Editor 2
Atari News and Comment 3
Atari Goes to the Dogs? 4
MAM Spotlight on CHAOS 6
Learning Telecommunications -- Bit by Bit 8
BASIC TurboCharger (8bit) 9
Drafting with Drafix1 (ST) 10
Hands On the XE Game System (8bit) 11
Cyber Studio (ST) 13
ST Notes 14
Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing (8bit & ST) 16
Super Directory (ST) 17
Take Action! with Your Programming (8bit) 18
Another Eight-bitter Bites the Dust 20
Empire -- Wargame of the Century (ST) 23
WordPerfect (ST) 26
Last Hacks 36

Club News and Minutes

CHAOS (Lansing, MI) 28
GAG (Flint, MI) 29
GKAUG (Kalamazoo, MI) 30
GLASS (Troy, MI) 30
GRASS (Grand Rapids, MI) 31
MACE (Southfield, MI) 32
TAG (Saginaw/ Tri-Cities) 34
WAUGI (Ann Arbor, MI) 35

Advertisers

Mars Merchandising 3
Terrific Corp. 6
Interactive MicroSystems 7
Alpha Systems 9
Rentertainment 12
Sector One 15
Soft House 19
Tech Specialities 22
Interstel 24
Basic Bits 'n' Bytes 25
United Computer 26
Proco Products 27
State Street Computer 29
Computer Emporium Inside Front Cover
Rite Way Back Cover

Letters to the Editor

Hello MAM,

I just received, on February 5th, the Feb. issue of your magazine. Good work! I'm glad to see it coming at the beginning of the month. You asked for input on the magazine, so here's my 2-cents.

The Cover

I would prefer a full-color photo or artwork on the cover. If MAM is to be sitting in computer stores next to magazines like Antic and such, then I feel it needs a cover that attracts attention. I like the font you've chosen for the name, but there's too much space between letters. It looks like a 15cpi font being printed at 10cpi. While I'm at it, I'd like the title on the cover about 20% larger.

Inside I like it! Keep your feature articles and club news separate. I hate fishing for the end of an article. I'm also very lazy and usually don't bother looking for it if it's not on the next page. I read the club news section too. Just because it's in back and I don't belong to all those groups doesn't make their news uninteresting.

I'd like to see a removable page put into MAM with the following:

Side A: A calendar showing the meeting dates and times of participating user groups. Once in a while I find I can visit a user group, but I can't find who meets when. Having a calendar would be a great constant reminder.

Side B: A list of BBS numbers for the participating groups. I get too interested in the articles to put down MAM and find a pen and paper to write phone numbers. When I'm at the computer I'm to lazy to hunt down my copy of MAM to look up BBS numbers.

Oh No! There's More

The possible dissolve of BCAUG upset me. I belong to an old car club in the midst of dissolving. I've told the officers of the car club my observations on why the club "didn't work." I'll list them here because they can be used as warning signs of a "doomed" club.

First, the club becomes a closed social group. Usually this consists of the officers and oldest members (not age, but time in the club). At meetings, very little club business gets discussed. Going to a club meeting is like being in a stranger's house watching them celebrate Christmas. As more and more people feel left out, they stop attending meetings. Meanwhile, the social group is having so much fun they are blind to the problem, dismissing the newly lost club members as deadbeats.

Second, the club fails to make novices and "non-owners" feel welcome. In the case of the car club I belong to, the club's policy was to welcome anyone to the group whether or not the potential member owned an old car or not, but the way the club conducted meetings and events made novices and "non-owners" feel left out. Any computer club should greet all potential members with open arms. Meetings and events should be planned in a way to make these people feel welcome. The game nights are great for making new members feel at home. An informal chat (phone call or letter) from an officer or long-time club member might be in order. Find how these people feel about the club and what they are hoping to learn. How many novices are going to stand up at a meeting when an ST is sitting open with someone describing this chip and that gizmo, and ask, "What's a mouse?"

Third, the members with the most talent, brains, or time to devote to the club are given preferred treatment by the club. Talent, brains, and time are nice traits for officers, but don't expect all club members to be this elite.

To keep people humble, remember Groucho Marx's quote, "I would never be a member of a club that would accept me as a member." One last comment. I'm a member of WAUG! and they've done a good job of avoiding these problems.

Comments on John Nagy's Software Article

I agree with Mr. Nagy. Something needs to be done to reward 8bit programmers for their shareware works. The big question is how to do this. When I had nothing more than an 800XL and a good old 1030 modem, I felt after I paid the connect time to download a program (at the lightning speed of 300 baud) or pay the long distance fee for accessing a board, I couldn't afford to pay anymore on that piece of software. (With some of the programs I've downloaded, I felt the programmer should pay for my wasted connect time. Back to the main point.) What if the clubs paid the programmer a small amount when the program was put into the club library? Then, whenever the club sold a copy of the program to a member, the club would send a token amount of the sale to the author. I know this raises many questions. How much to give? What about all the programs already in the club library? Does a small utility warrant the same pay scale as a full-blown word processor?

I don't have answers to these questions, but think of the possibilities if these hard working programmers get some reward for their effort. It would put the club in direct contact with the programmer. The programmer would be more likely to write programs. He would also be more likely to provide updates, debug or modify his works for the club. He may even let the group alpha or beta test

future programs. It looks like I've spent enough time on my soap box.

Always Atari,
Jay Skotcher

Attention Atari ST Owners!

The time has come to unite! We need to let certain programmers know that we want to buy their programs. Write them! Convince them to do ST conversions. Show your support!

Below are several companies and their games that I would like to see converted. I have contacted all three of them, and each has said either they didn't know when they would do a conversion or that they were not going to do one. If you are interested in any of the following games, please join in and write them.

3-d Helicopter Simulator, Thexder [Sierra On-Line, PO Box 485, Coarsegold CA, 94039]

Fire Power, Turbo, Galatic Invasion, Land of Legends, Faery Tale Adventures [Microillusions, 17408 Chatsworth, Granda Hills, CA, 91344]

Chuck Yeager's Flight Simulator, Ferrari Formula One [EA, 2755 Campus Drive, San Mateo CA, 94403].

If there are other titles that you want to see converted and would like a general call for support, like this one, please feel free to write me.

Anthony Robinson
PO Box 18093
Lansing, MI 48901

Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by John Nagy

Here's more Atari news and rumors gleaned from press releases, club newsletters, backroom chatter, and personal interviews with the people who should know... .

With an "official" product lineup including two Game consoles, three different 8bit computers, 68000 series computers in half-, one-, two- and four-meg sizes, 8086 PC and XT clones, an AT clone, a 386 clone, and the 32-bit Transputer, Atari has perhaps the widest line of consumer computers in the world! Now if we are ever offered a chance to buy them, who knows what might happen to this amazing company?

Hottest news in some time -- OSS and ICD tie the knot! Optimised Systems Software, famous for designing Atari BASIC, then BASIC XL, BASIC XE, DOS, DOS XL, Action!, and more... is now selling their Atari line through ICD Inc.... makers of SpartaDOS, the US Doubler, the P:R: Connection, the Multi-Input/Output box, and more! It appears to be a buy-out, and word has it that Bill Wilkinson, long OSS leader and Atari guru extraordinaire has bailed out entirely. ICD will also distribute the formerly unavailable and very powerful MAC65 assembler and accessories as well! For MAC65, Action!, Writer's Tool, BASIC XL+XE, DOS XL, and even Personal Pascal for the Atari ST, contact OSS/ ICD at 815-968-2228, or call their BBS at 815-968-2229.

Other shakeups at ICD include the loss of Keith Ledbetter (of Express! terminal program fame). It is said Keith went back to his old job in Virginia after direction frustrations at ICD and a decision by ICD to end development plans for Express! Pro BBS systems. He is apparently going to "go it alone" and continue Express! development and sales privately. We wish the best of luck to Keith, who helped lead Atari telecommunications into the 20th century.

I have no word yet as to how this affects the release date of the (still) unavailable, but Atari-funded, Express!212 for use on the new modem and an 8bit computer without an expensive interface. However, several flavors of revised Amodem terminal programs are available, and now a handler, devised and circulated in the public domain by the Seattle-Puget Sound Atari Computer Enthusiasts (SPACE) club, will actually allow Express! 850 to be used with the SX212. Check your area BBS or club library. If you can find one, the SX212 is just about the best modem deal available for *any* computer user, and especially for 8bit users who haven't invested in an interface. Plus, since the modem will also plug into any "normal" IBM or ST computer,

you won't lose your investment if you change computers. It's well under $100 by mail or on dealer shelves (where?).

The word from Darek Mihocka is that a *new* version of his ST-Transformer will be out this spring... and it will be 50-75% *faster* than the "old slow" one. You read a lot about the 8bit Atari emulation program here in MAM last year, and the publicity helped urge Atari to allow the use of their copyrighted operating system and BASIC code for use in the public domain emulator. This time the Transformer will include player missile graphics (Darek expects!) and might include an R: handler for modem use. Darek tells me he has pared the formerly 88 clock-cycles overhead per instruction lookup (done every time an opcode is acted on!) down to 32 cycles, and has optimized other parts of the code as well. This increase will likely not bring it up to "full 8bit speed" in many programs, but it will be close in many.

The *biggest* difference of all will be that the new ST-Transformer will offer the option at runtime to choose Atari 8bit Emulation, Apple][Emulation, or Commodore 64 Emulation!!! The "original emulation demo" program that Derek circulated almost two years ago included some Apple emulation, but this time it should be quite complete.

So then, jokingly, I asked Darek about support for 1050 drives on the ST to allow use of 8bit commercial software... and he tells me about some developmental support from 8bit programmer Alan Reeve (author of *ReeveKey, News Station,* etc.) of Chicago. Alan has contributed a program that allows Atari 8bit disks -- even boot disks -- to be read *directly* by an ST for use in the emulator when used with a 5.25" drive such as those for *pc:ditto*. The ST continues its reputation as the computer that can be *anything*. The list of emulation now includes Atari 8, Commodore 64, Apple][, Macintosh, CP/M, IBM, UNIX, um...and more, I think. Oh yea, it can run ST software too...

DTACK Grounded, a company that used an unusual distribution method for its first and only product, DBASIC, has folded. DTACK gave out free copies of the BASIC itself, along with a few copies of the manual to user groups for review. The idea was that once you got the BASIC for free, you would be happy to buy the big manual from DTACK... Well, it didn't work. One account says that DTACK sold only 60 copies of the manual before calling it quits. No additional support or updates will be released, although many reviewers were impressed with many aspects of the BASIC. You might still pick up a copy from your user group.

Atari Goes to the Dogs?

News Analysis by Bill & Pattie Rayl
(Quotes in this article originally appeared on the Atari16 sig of CompuServe.)

Neil Harris, ex-director of Marketing and Communications and current East and Midwest Director of Sales and Marketing for Atari Corp., once said something to the effect that it is fashionable for Atari owners to hate Atari Corporation.

This "trend" is no more apparent than on the major information networks like CompuServe and in the various Atari user groups across the country. Dissatisfaction with support coming from Atari is being expressed by users/owners, software developers and dealers. This dissatisfaction is quickly growing into what could spell the doom of Atari in the US.

The Users

Many Atari owners have felt a growing sense of abandonment and disregard from a company they care deeply about. Being an Atari owner has, almost from Day One, meant facing scorn and even ridicule from the rest of the computer community. The 8bit Atari owners basically took this in stride, secure in the knowledge that they had the best personal computer on the market. And, even if the industry in general wasn't supportive, the old Warner Atari at least seemed to care about the people buying its products. Then, the sky fell in. The old Atari, due to what can only be called gross mismanagement, ran itself out of business. Eight-bit owners have felt orphaned ever since.

The new Atari was far too busy getting its feet on the ground and launching its new computer to fully support the old machines. Combine this with the fact that the old Atari practically killed the 8bit dealer network and you get a lot of people with nowhere to go for assistance. First came dismay and bewilderment, then anger and finally resignation.

Does this scenario sound familiar to you ST owners out there? The signs seem to be pointing to "history" repeating itself with the ST line -- Atari seems to be moving in a new direction with its Transputer, and the "dealer network" is still non-existant in the US.

Betsy Garfield of Chicago, Ill., says, "There are almost no stores in the Chicago metro area where the ST is available. People in California seem to have great quantities of machines and software...everywhere else in the country, tough luck."

Closer to home, the Battle Creek Atari Users' Group cited Atari's harsh mail-order policies as a contributor to its recent difficulties. In places

where noone sells Ataris, prospective buyers are often forced to mail order equipment. Atari has taken a hard line on mail order of the STs, leaving people like members of BCAUG with no easy access to new hardware.

The Dealers

So, why hasn't Atari been able to establish a strong dealer network in the US? Why is it that computer stores local to groups such as BCAUG refuse to carry the Atari line, even after being approached, entreated and even begged to do so by loyal Atarians? The answer is simple -- Atari has not created an environment attractive enough for dealers to "take a chance" on a company that still has a game machine manufacturer image.

Atari has taken on the attitude that its dealers should and will meet certain criteria (full service department, traveling sales/service personnel, etc.), purchase equipment in quantity and/or in "sets" (if you want to sell Megas, you have to pay for a $3,000 "parts kit") and various other "marketing strategies" designed to weed out the faint of heart.

If, by luck, chance or sheer determination, dealers makes it through "boot camp," they are given a place on the front lines of Atari's war. Unfortunately, once dealers are in the trenches, they are left to fight an undirected guerilla war.

"My local distributor and a foreign distributor both tell me they can't get products from Atari," said Dave Groves, a SysOp of CompuServe. It seems Atari has attempted to recruit already trained troops, armed them with a few arrows and daggers and thrust them into a technological war with no supply lines to help the soldiers keep up the fight.

Tom Mitchell, who works for one of the largest and oldest Atari dealers in the US, summed it up well when he said, "With no national marketing support from Atari for the ST...us sales soldiers are very tired." Moral can often be a determining factor in any war, and Atari dealer moral is in a decline which makes the recent stock market drops look like minor fluctuations.

The Developers

Some of the most serious and pointed criticism directed at Atari Corporation is coming from the third-party software and hardware manufacturers. Many programmers complained about the original documentation that came with the developer's package. Much of the docs had nothing at all to do with the ST, and the entire package was disorganized. Atari has produced new documentation, but it took over a year, and some developers are now saying they are having trouble getting the developer's package from Atari.

Another complaint deals with the "bugs" in the TOS operating system. "There have been too many excuses from Atari as to why this or that product is delayed, blitters are not available or TOS is not fixed," said *Flash!* programmer Alan Page. "Is it a smart business decision for Atari to leave the 40 folder bug, GDOS problems and other glitches unsolved for such a long time?"

Alan and others believe that Atari simply lacks the personnel to accomplish its goals -- supply both the European and US markets, produce the XE Game machine, ST and Mega lines as well as promote the Abaq Transputer. Atari has done wonders with its "minimal staff" philosophy, "lean and mean" as Atari likes to call it. Now, the company has come to a point where it cannot possibly continue on this course without turning its back on some projects. As Alan Page put it, " 'Lean and mean' turns out to be 'starving and anemic'."

Enough Doom and Gloom

Is there no light at the end of all this; no glimmer of hope? Is the ST destined to follow its 8bit brother as we watch history repeat itself? We don't think so. Atari is more than financially sound, and even now the company is working to increase production with a plant in the US. As Neil Harris put it, "In this business, things can turn around in a hurry. Not overnight, like the voices of discontent have been demanding. We [Atari] need to get production cranked up (in process in a big way), and get the marketing programs in line (ditto) -- but when all is ready, we'll see some action."

The majority of developers also have faith in Atari and the computers they produce. "It's true that software sales on the ST due to marketing policies by Atari and piracy have not been what I expected or hoped for," said Gordon Monnier, president of Michtron, "but we are not and have no plans to leave the Atari software market."

With the recent release or packages like Word Perfect, Microsoft Write, Drafix1, etc., the ST line is actually stronger and more viable than ever before. The only thing missing is that the outside world has yet to recognize the power, ease of use and value of the Atari machines. Many people in the computing world have never even heard of the ST, a sad thing to say for a 68000-based powerhouse that has been on the market for over two years!

We believe Atari is waking up to the fact that it is no longer good enough to produce a great piece of hardware and offer it at a reasonable price. The current computer purchaser wants -- no, demands -- more than that. Without excellent end-user, developer, and dealer support, even the most impressive hardware package will quickly fade into oblivion.

What can we all do?

The time has come for us all to lay down our arms and forget about fighting a war that has no winner. As users, we must break out of the dismay-anger-resignation syndrome. It is essential that we let our voice be heard in Ataridom, but at the same time we must not let our voice degenerate into disorganized shouting matches and name-calling. It is often far too easy to become carried away when one feels strongly about something. If criticism is directed to Atari in a professional, constructive manner, perhaps more people will listen.

As individuals and user group members, we can surely do more to promote our interests than we have in the past. Instead of looking for Atari to pave our streets with new and exciting hardware and software, we should be "lobbying" to get developers to produce what we want and to get retailers to sell those products.

If Atari and the user groups across this nation would work toward the common goal of gaining the respect and acceptance of the machines we all care so deeply about, then truly nothing could prevent what we have all hoped for from becoming reality.

[Please write or call (our phone and address is on the back cover) or leave us mail on CompuServe -- 71361,411 -- for furthur discussion and comment.]

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MAM Spotlight on CHAOS

Prepared by Leo Sell

From out of the void...CHAOS!! I know that's not how the story usually goes, but it is apt. CHAOS, like many user groups, came into existence to fill a void. CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society. Supporting all Atari computers, 8bit and 16bit alike, we are one of the largest Atari user groups in Michigan. Our membership numbers over 150, and is drawn from all over Michigan as well as out of state and Canada. We are most proud of our public domain disk libraries. Recent trading and revisions have made it one of the best sources of quality programs anywhere. Mail orders are cheerfully accepted. Write for a catalog (over 40 pages, $2.00).

A recent innovation is our library rental program. Any club or individual can rent all or part of our disk library, copying what they please onto their own media, and saving a good deal of money in the process. The prices, at this time are $65.00 for the 8bit library, $85.00 for the 16bit library, and $120 for both, plus deposit. Please note, however, that the prices are under study at this time and may be changed by the time this is published.

Our publications library has books for the beginner to the expert, back issues of Atari-related magazines, and exchange newsletters from nearly 100 other clubs. Our CHAOS BBS (517-371-1106) is known for its quality, dependability and ease of use, as well as being a great source for information. Often innovative and online for over 5 years now, the CHAOS BBS is now offering 2400 baud, online games, and more. Very early on, CHAOS made a strong commitment to the ST and its owners. As a result of that commitment, our ST INterest Group continues to grow in numbers and support.

CHAOS, through the hard work of several members, was the originator of Michigan Atari Magazine. Today, we participate in the magazine, offering yearly subscriptions as part of our membership benefits. This is just a partial list, giving the highlights. It doesn't include such things as the camaraderie, assistance and so forth that is a part of every group.

History

CHAOS (under a different name) began as a small group of hackers, hobbyists, and computer professionals, with a common interest in the Atari 800. As time passed, our membership grew, adding Atari 400 owners, cassette owners and more. With growth came the need for structure and organization. The name was changed to CHAOS, a constitution was written and we incorporated. A

number of the founders were management and computer specialists. Apparently they saw (correctly) the need for a strong structure and organization. Our constitution was revised in 1985, but the philosophy and style of organization the club's founders put into place has been retained. The result has been a consistency and dependability that is too little found these days. CHAOS has become one of the single best sources of information and support in any computer community. We have grown and matured. Our bywords are consistency, organization, dependability and value.

Organization

I truly believe that the structure and organization we have has made us successful. As I mentioned, CHAOS is a corporation and is organized in much the same way as a business. Our Board of Directors consists of five elected officers, including the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and two at-large members -- one for each of the major groups of owners (8bit and 16bit). In addition to the officers, each main function of the club is headed by an appointed manager or leader. The larger jobs, such as the disk library, are further divided using assistants whose work is overseen by the manager. Further use of the appointees' ideas and abilities is made by a management type of committee, called the Activities Board. It consists of the Vice President as chair and all appointees of the club. Together they oversee their various activities and responsibilities and brainstorm for new ideas and services.

Another of our recent accomplishments of which we take pride, is the way we have weathered the ST crisis. It seems many clubs split the ST owners completely off, for a variety of reasons. That didn't happen here, although for a time there was some controversy and sentiment for a new and separate ST group. In the very early days of the ST, the CHAOS Board of Directors deemed that we would support the ST as fully as possible. We strongly urged ST owners to remain with the club and take advantage of the structure and resources that already existed. We emphasized the common ground and needs of both 8bit and 16bit owners. We committed strongly to the ST owners and then stuck to our resolution. We have also made it plain that we believe the future lies with the ST. As a result, our ST presence continues to grow and prosper, as does the club itself.

The Future

What does the future hold for CHAOS? I believe we will continue to prosper and support owners of new and old Atari computers alike. As a percentage of membership, ST owners and Atari generations yet to come will continue to increase and that of the 8bit will decrease. But the foundations laid by the 8bit owners will serve the future members well. And, because we have joined together for support now, we can look forward to mutual support, cooperation, and harmony for a long time to come. You can write CHAOS at: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

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Learning Telecommunications... Bit by Bit

By Jerry Cross

Picture this for a minute... The time is the near distant future. You just got home from your job at the office. You are one of the unfortunate people who still must commute, since most other office workers do their work from the comfort of their home over their computers. After taking off your coat, you stop at your own computer terminal and check your mail. Let's see...bills...a letter from your brother (he's vacationing in Florida), and he sent along a digitized picture of him on the beach... more bills...junk mail (yes, just like they did in the past)...more bills (WOW, look at that phone bill!)...

You proceed to punch up your bank account code and your bank statement appears on the screen. A few quick keystrokes and you instruct the bank to transfer funds to pay off your bills the next day. While you are at it, you take your money card out of your pocket and insert it into the slot on the computer interface. You instruct the bank to withdraw money from your account, which is then encoded onto a magnetic strip located on your card. You can later give this card to a merchant, who will then deduct money from your card using the same method. You can still remember stories your grandfather told you about how people carried around little pieces of paper to pay for things!

You smell something in the kitchen and go to investigate. "What's that smell?" you ask your wife.

"I got a recipe for synthetic meatloaf from the Good Housekeeping database and was trying it out" she says.

You dash off to the kitchen terminal and rapidly key in your inquiry. Yup, the delivery boy dropped off the Alka-Seltzer you ordered this morning. Whew!

You search the house for the kids. Junior is up in his room playing wargames with dozens of other kids from around the country over the games telenetwork. Your oldest daughter is in the study downloading her latest college lessons. She is going to a local community college, but is earning extra credits by communicating with a college on the other side of the country.

While you wait for dinner to finish you go to the living room to read the news. You sit on the sofa and turn on the television set. You are rewarded with a perfectly clear, static free digitized picture of another Gilligan's Island rerun. Not again! You pick up the remote control and punch in your objections to the show. The information is sent to the television station and recorded on their computer survey database. Your comments, along with hundreds of others, are recorded and sent to the program director, who will then cancel the show and replace it with Green Acres next week. Oh well...

A few more keystrokes and you are now looking at the latest news from the ViewText News Network. Newspapers are a thing of the past now, since by the time you received it, the news was hours old. By following the onscreen menus you are led to the latest sports scores, editorials, and world news.

Hmmm...this all sounds like something from the Jetsons cartoons, right? This won't happen for another 50 years you say? Would you believe all this will be a reality by the end of the 1990's? Everything you read is already being tested, or is being currently used, someplace in the country.

Yup, it's true. Barring government red tape, the usual lawsuits by small companies crying "anti-trust," and assorted anti-big brother interest groups, everything you read will be a standard feature in every household! This will all be done using a new technology called Integrated Services Digital Networking (ISDN). In concept, each house will be connected into a service center, which is also connected into a huge variety of computer databases and communication services. This can include such services as alarm circuits, databases, packet networks, vidtex services, and lots more.

ISDN will allow the phone company to offer each customer one voice line, plus two data lines, one being capable of carrying high speed data transmissions. ISDN will allow you to have a low speed interactive data line (9.6Kbits per second), or intermediate speed bulk data line (1.5 Megabits per second), and even high speed full motion video data lines, capable of handling 45 megabits per second!

The beauty of this system is it uses existing phone cables, so there is no need to rebuild existing telecommunications plants. The user will be able to send and receive virtually any type of message, including voice, data, graphics, telemetry, and any type of information that can be encoded and packaged in a standardized digital form. This technology is currently being tested in certain cities around the world. Because it is still in the testing stages, it is being offered only to certain businesses that require large numbers of high speed data lines. But, as the technology improves, and as soon as enough equipment can be manufactured, you can expect to see it offered on a standard basis.

According to the information I received from Ameritech, the cost of this system (when it is installed on a large basis) should be about 2-3 times what you are paying for a single voice line service. But when you stop to look at what you are getting (a high speed data line plus standard data line and

voice line), it is truly a bargain!

But all this is still in the future. The average home computer user must be satisfied with slow speed telecommunications, and the current assortment of information services being offered. What I hope to accomplish in this and future articles is to get you acquainted with telecommuncations, how it works, and what it has to offer you. Next month we will start by looking at the equipment you will need to get started. Future articles will cover online services, running your own phonelines, and communication software reviews.

I have about 5 years of experience with modems, and have run a BBS for 4 years (on both 8bits and STs). There is still a lot of things I don't know. I am still learning new things every day and will pass them along to you too. If you have any questions you would like answered, or a topic you wish covered, drop me a line.

But many of you are probably thinking to yourself, "I will never get into telecommunications." Well, you remember the last time you used an Automatic Teller to withdraw money, or how about when you used that card to punch in at work? Information was sent over phone lines to a computer which responded by storing data and causing a reaction (dispensing money or writing a check). You say you won't ever get into it? Well.... gotcha!

BASIC TurboCharger from ALPHA Systems

8bit Software Review by Bob Retelle

This is the kind of book I wish I'd had when I was learning to program my venerable old Atari 400, and later, my 800. In those days, much of what we learned was the result of trial and error, guided by the articles which occasionally appeared in computer magazines.

BASIC Turbocharger is a 128-page book, which comes with a double-sided disk containing 167 Machine Language subroutines in the form of BASIC subroutines. These subroutines can be merged with your own BASIC programs, to give you the speed and power of Machine Language, without forcing you to learn the actual 6502 Machine Code.

The subroutines cover a wide range of subjects, from creating different graphic modes on the screen, to Disk I/O, reading the joystick ports, sorting arrays, and a lot more.

There are a number of subroutines dealing with loading and saving different formats of picture files, including one which will save a screen in compressed Koalapad format, something else I wish I'd had long ago!

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The book presents a very nice explanation of player missile graphics, along with an array of subroutines to set up PM graphics and move them in all directions smoothly at machine language speed.

Most of the subroutines have an example of a BASIC program which will show you how to use the subroutine, and its results, making it easy to learn how to get the most out of them.

Here's a listing of the chapters in the book, to give you an idea of the subjects covered:

A Little Bit about BASIC
Moving Memory
Fun with Text
Fun with Memory
Numeric Arrays
Graphics & Antic Modes
Disk I/O
Loader/Saver Routines
Loading and Saving Picture Screens
KoalaPad and Atari Touch Tablet
Fun with Pictures
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Player/Missile Graphics
Player/Missiles in Vertical Blank Interrupt
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[Special Thanks to Alpha Systems for the review copy of BASIC TurboCharger, which Alpha has also generously donated to WAUG!]

Drafting with DRAFIX1

ST Software Review by B. Johnson (GLASS)

DRAFIX1 (V 1.0) by Foresight Resources is, at the time of this writing, the most advanced drafting package available for the Atari ST. It comes on two single-sided disks (not copy-protected) with complete documentation; an installation and setup guide (84 pages); a "getting started" book with tutorials (252 pages); and a technical reference manual (206 pages). It's a lot of reading, but quite necessary if you are to become proficient at computer aided design (CAD). This package retails for $200.00 list but you may be able to find it for as low as $160.00 locally.

I use Autocad on the IBM AT computer at work, and use First Cadd by Generic at home on the ST. I'm also somewhat familiar with GFA Draft by Michtron and EasyDraw. I've found Drafix to be the most complete drafting package available for the ST at the present time, with a few reservations. Drafix supports eight Hewlett Packard, nine Houston Instrument, three Roland, one Nicolet/Brunsing, two Enter Computer Sweet-P, one Numonics, two Ioline, and one Tandy plotter.

Yet, it doesn't have a single dot matrix printer driver in this first version for the ST. A dot plotter program is available for the IBM version of Drafix (V 2.0) and might be available for the ST in the future. There is a screen dump, but the resolution is disappointing.

This CAD package will run in high (monochrome) and medium (color) resolutions. You can use up to eight line types, 12 font styles, 256 layers and all the other features you'd expect from such a complete drafting package. This allows the user to put together complete sets of drawings: i.e. house floorplans (layer 0 for the main floor, layer 1 for electrical layout, layer 2 for plumbing layout, layer 3 for heating, ventilation and air conditioning layout), printed circuit diagrams, wiring diagrams, etc.

One of the features I really like is the ability to save a drawing in Degas format as a slide. If you have Degas or Degas Elite, you can convert this slide into any resolution, add color and even create your own slide show.

Drafix doesn't use GEM much -- only for loading and saving files. The screen consists of three levels of pull-down menus that run horizontally across the top with ten items in the top level. Each one can lead to nine items in the second level, and each one of those can lead to eight items in the third level. It sounds complicated but it isn't, and you can always see how you arrived at the present command, since all three levels of menus are visible at one time.

On the left side of the screen are approximately 20 commands always visible and available for selecting and changing drawing parameters at will. At the bottom of the screen is a status line with X and Y coordinates, with available ram and the time always visible. Because so much information is displayed at one time, I highly recommend the monochrome monitor for this package.

The "Getting Started" manual contains 19 tutorials on different aspects of computer drawing. This is an excellent way to learn the software with as little pain as possible. These tutorials will teach you how to draw lines parallel or perpendicular to

each other, draw circles or arcs, draw various shapes such as hexagons, ellipses, rectangles and so on, adding text to a drawing, dimensioning an object and finally plotting a drawing. It also discusses how to save an object to disk as a symbol and later recall that object to use in any drawing. The symbol library you create will save many hours of drawing the same object over and over. This is where you'll really begin to generate drawings faster and more accurately.

As for text, you can use any one of 12 font styles, any size text and write at any angle. The text editing package has been omitted from this version of Drafix. It will probably show up as a future release like the dot matrix printer drivers. I've noticed many companies offer a good software package but leave out something essential and then develop one more software packages to fill the gap. Even so, $160.00 for Drafix and (possibly) $40.00 for the dot matrix drivers is still a bargain for the complete package. Autocad for the IBM would run you well over $2100.00! I don't think I'll complain too much.

Drafix1 is the most complete drawing package available for the ST -- and reasonably priced. If you're serious about CAD, then Drafix1 deserves your consideration.

Hands on the Atari XE Game System:

An In-Depth look

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[The following review is an in-depth look at the Atari XE Game System. I had the opportunity to really give it the once over, and did so because of the limited review given in Antic. This is expressly created for distribution in original form, as long as the copyright remains intact, whether by BBS or CompuServe or your local newsletter.]

Atari's first new 8bit computer in some time has hit the streets, and preliminary magazine reviews have been pretty scanty, so when a shiny new machine came in, I gave it the works.

First Impressions

The XE Game System is built well. At least as well as the 130XE and perhaps a bit better. The base unit is solid and the separate, detachable keyboard is nicely weighted. The POWER switch, perhaps one of the most-used switches on any game machine, isn't the greatest and could have been better made. On the other hand, the big pastel-colored START/SELECT/OPTION/RESET buttons were fine. The detached keyboard is a new entity to Atari 8bits, and I really like it. It isn't super-light, and is well-sized and shaped for setting in one's lap for programming. I say programming because many long-time Atari owners are giving the XE Game System a serious look as a second machine, largely because of the keyboard. However, the console keys are on the main unit, not the detached keyboard, so some of it's usefulness as a "lean back and relax" work device is inhibited.

The HELP key is on the keyboard, and I noticed that it has the same distinctive feel of the rest of the keyboard, eventhough it's a large round button like the console keys. This means the XE Game System keyboard is not made of the same unit as the 130/65XE keyboard, and if something breaks, you can't tap that large collection of parts. Otherwise, the keyboard is completely identical to the XE keyboard in feel, shape and layout. You almost wonder why they bothered to make a new one.

The cable that attaches the keyboard to the main unit is about 12 inches long and plugs in on the left hand side in a recessed port. It uses a connector much like the 850 interface printer port -- like a joystick connector but with more pins. I noticed someone thoughtfully included a little nub on the connector so when you plug in the keyboard cable, it fits snug and is not likely to come out when you pull on the keyboard, which is inevitable. The keyboard also has hooks at the back allowing you to connect it to the main unit, forming a single piece. This was easy to do and I found myself switching from lap to desk-connected as the software I was using dictated. The main unit and keyboard connected together make up a 14x15 inch square, so be sure to have plenty of desk space for this system.

The main unit has the cartridge slot on the top, like an XL, but slanted at an angle matching the XE-style design, though there is no cover protecting the cartridge slot as on the XL. The joystick ports are on the right side, underneath and at an angle. This is the same sort of approach used first on the 1200XL and later on the 1040/520ST-FM. While it doesn't make it real easy to switch joysticks/lightguns, I didn't have any trouble with it at all, and it does make it more aesthetically pleasing and easier on the joystick connectors to have the cable coming out of the computer in the general direction of the rest of the joystick.

On the back of the unit I ran into something of a surprise -- an audio jack! A second later I realized that the XE game system has changed the

connector for the monitor output. Unlike the 5-pin DIN plug monitor jack on other 8bits, the XE system monitor output is supplied on two phono-plug jacks; one for sound, one for composite video. The television plug is next to these, but confusion is unlikely. Continuing across the back, there is no parallel bus connector. There isn't on the 65XE either (which this really is), but it means you can't use parallel bus peripherals like the MIO from ICD. Next is a standard SIO port to connect to Atari peripherals. Amusingly, in Atari's current school of design, they stamp an icon above each connector on the back to indicate what should plug in where. On the ST for example, there is a telephone over the RS232 port, and a diskette over the disk drive port. Following this school of thought, there are 4 icons crammed in over the SIO port! At least things are consistent. The power connector is identical to the previous XL/XE connector.

Having wrapped up the physical description, how does it run software? Like a 65XE. In fact, absolutely like a 65XE, which is no surprise since that's essentially what it is. But for safety's sake, I decided to give it a full-range compatibility test. In total, I tested 8 cartridges and a lot of disk software. One of the cartridges was a 600/800XL system diagnostics cartridge as well. Even this cart claimed that the system was an XE, and everything ran fine. During the testing of all this various software, I did notice some sort of twitch in the video. It only happened once every five or ten minutes that I saw, and the diagnostic cart didn't make it happen, but I checked the monitor and it was fine. I'll be investigating more XE Game Systems to find out if this is a factory trait or just a individual case.

A couple options come with the XE Game System that weren't previously available. Most notably the lightgun and a couple new cartridges. The System also has Missile Command built-in. Wherever it is, it's awfully well-hidden. I turned the machine on with no cartridge and it came up in BASIC. When I held down the OPTION key, it came up with the XL/ XE Self Test screen. Needless to say, it IS a 65XE. I never got a chance to test Missile Command because quite frankly, I didn't even remember it was there!

The Atari lightgun is at once the most fun addition and the biggest disappointment. One of the two cartridges that comes with the system is a bug-shootout game. At first, it seems rather simple-minded, but the more I played the more I enjoyed it, and it gets quite challenging. Unfortunately, the challenge isn't one to hone your skills on. The lightgun is easily the cheapest component of the system. The aim was noticeably off, even at point blank, and the "gun sights" formed into it's plastic case were completely useless. Sometimes you get the distinct impression that the gun's aim actually changes. I might

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attribute that to reviewer error, but having over half-million point scores on the gun game "Hogan's Alley" in the arcades, I have spent at least a hundred hours with a good, workable system and this doesn't come close. Still, after a while I was able to get 80+ percent "hit ratios" on the included game, so it can work. Owners of the game system may find that they "learn" the aim of their own guns and enjoy them more. We also tested the game cartridge and gun on a standard 130XE and 800XL, and they work fine. Perhaps Atari can be convinced to release the gun separately for existing Atari owners.

The other cartridge included with the system is Flight Simulator II. This in itself is an impressive feat. Flight Simulator II is a 128K cartridge, making it the largest Atari cartridge ever produced. Flight Simulator II itself is an amazingly accurate 3D solid-graphics flight simulation that lets you fly a Piper PA-28-181 Archer II, a single engine 148 mph aircraft. It also has a "Europe 1917" mode that lets you test your flying skill in World War I combat against enemy planes and ground targets. One advantage of the cartridge FS-II is instant load time. The original disk Flight Simulator II would occasionally pause to load additional scenery information from diskette. The FS-II cartridge instantly changes scenery for constantly smooth flight. I did not check to see if the FS-II cart. could read Flight Simulator scenery disks.

Of all the system, there was only one incompatibility that I discovered, that being a difference in the operation of the RESET key. On the XL/XE computer line, when you pressed and held down the RESET key, the system would be held, reset, in never-never land. This was often handy if you hadn't quite gotten the next disk in the drive yet or needed a second before the machine tried to boot. It also made a special technique for saving extended-memory RAMdisks possible, where if you locked the machine up, you could hit and hold RESET, insert a cartridge, release and hit RESET again, then remove the cartridge. The machine will always cold boot, but without ever having to shut the machine off, thus the RAMdisk contents are intact.

On the new XE Game System, the RESET key didn't reset on the way down, but reset when you release the button (on the way back up.) Holding the button in this halfway up state proved to be difficult at best. Since the XE Game System is otherwise identical to the 800XL, it is not unimaginable that some game system owners might want to add memory (a.k.a. a 256K standard upgrade,) in the future. The difference is more or less negligible.

All in all, the XE Game System is a fine Atari 8bit. As a new machine for people interested in gaming, the massive selection of Atari games makes it a far better value than Sega's & Nintendo's offerings, and the graphics are, of course, terrific. Add to that the fact it is a real computer, with all the versatility thereof, and it can't be beat. As a machine for new Atari owners, I judge it a better value than the 65XE, given the better keyboard and included software and gun. As a replacement or upgrade for existing Atari owners, it's a close call. The detachable keyboard is a joy to use. On the other hand, the lack of parallel bus capability is a big minus. More and more people are putting hard disk drives on their 8bits, and the "big" Atari 8bit (>256K of memory, several drives and/or a hard disk) is getting common. It might make a good "partner" machine.

Any way you look at it, the XE Game System is a good machine that will make it into a lot of homes, bringing new owners, new users, and yet more customers for Atari 8bit software. For 8bit owners everywhere, "Thanks Atari."

CYBER STUDIO

(CAD-3D 2.02 + CYBERMATE)

ST Software Review by Dante Stella

Recently, I purchased CAD-3D (v 2.02) from ANTIC software with the intention of easily creating animations. Although it wasn't as easy as I expected, CAD-3D is still a powerful package for your design needs.

The documentation for the package is clear and well-written, although the documentation for the included animation editor is 80+ pages, and you must print it out. A nice three-ring binder is included, so it looks tidy on a shelf!

On the whole, the object editing portion of the program is well-written and easy to use, although it may be somewhat slow when dealing with complex objects. Four views may be used at once, with optional full screen options. Objects may be seen in wire frame, hidden line, soft edge, and/or colored frame modes. Primitives and powerful spin (lathe) and extrude tools make creating complex objects easy but sometimes slow. A full range of rotation and camera controls is given.

Animation with this program is created with CAD-3D and edited/modified by the Cybermate program included in the package. In the final mode, it can take from 10 seconds to 1 minute to create a frame of animation, but in some cases draft mode gives comparable quality at ten times the speed. Still frames may be created in DEGAS or NeoChrome formats.

All in all, this is a good package for you if you are interested in animation, design, graphics, or the like. If you can live with the $90 price, it may just be what you were looking for in a graphics package. Cyber Studio, Antic Software, 544 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

ST Notes

by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Last month I mentioned a PD program called Monoware. This little GEM allowed you to run monochrome software on a color monitor. Well, I've just received a new product for review called ST Omnires (by Hypertek/Silicon Springs Development Corp.) that also accomplishes this feat -- and a whole lot more!

This unique piece of software allows you to run all three resolutions on either a color OR monochrome monitor. The software is carried by E. Arthur Brown, a company that specializes in unique products for the ST.

Running ST Omnires is easy enough... simply put the disk in the drive and boot your system. There are 8 programs in the Auto folder named Omnires1.prg through Omnires8.prg. You will be greeted with a screen where you choose one of eight possible modes for color emulation on monochrome monitors or monochrome emulation on color monitors or TVs. (More on these modes later). Once you determine which mode you like, copy the correct Omnires program to an Auto folder on your disk, then run Makekey.prg...

What!! What is Makekey you ask? This is Hypertek's attempt at copy-protecting the disk, and it really isn't a bad method. Simply run Makekey.prg and a special software "Key" is read into ram and transferred to the destination disk. Now your ST Writer disk (or whatever) will run Omnires without ever asking for the original! The user can make unlimited backups, but he must have the original as it is read each time Makekey is run. There is one drawback to this method, however, and it involves autobooting hard drives (like my Supra). Makekey will not transfer the key to the hard drive, and since I have two floppies, ST Omnires requires a Key disk in drive B. I talked with Hypertek and they indicated that they were addressing that problem, and the next release would allow you to boot Omnires from C without needing a Key disk.

ST Omnires is a godsend for monochrome-only owners who have been drooling over the multitude of software available for color systems. When ST Omnires is booted, you get a selection of eight possible modes. A program called Rename.prg renames the Omnires program you want to .PRG, and renames the rest to .PRX. I highly recommend replacing Rename with STselect from Michtron if you have it -- it's considerably faster.

Mode 1 shows Low rez on 1/4 of the screen (it's like having a 5" diagonal monitor), Medium rez is displayed on 1/2 of the screen, you have only two shades (black and white) and the screen updates *very* quickly. Mouse movement is very smooth.

Mode 2 displays Low rez on 1/2 of the screen, Medium rez is full screen, you have 4 grey scales, and the screen updates slightly slower than Mode 1. Mouse movement is slightly jerky. The picture looks sharp and is easy to read.

Mode 3 displays both Low and Medium rez as full screen, you have 16 grey scales, (still only four shades in Medium rez) and screen update is significantly slower (for Low rez only). Mouse movement in Low rez is *very* jerky. In this mode, the screen looks fabulous!

Mode 4 is a slightly enhanced version of Mode 3. You must have 1 meg or more to use this mode. There is a slight speed increase in screen updates, and the mouse moves a little better. I'd place this mode's speed half way between 2 and 3.

MODES 5-8 are identical to 1-4 with the exception that the color palette is reset whenever necessary. These four modes are used for running color programs that try to reset the screen colors during the program's execution.

I have found Mode 2 to be about the best for emulating a color monitor, while still retaining fairly smooth mouse movement and quick screen update. The program works as advertised, and everything I tried (about 70 programs) worked flawlessly! The one exception was Spectrum 512, but then again who would buy Spectrum 512 and run it without color?

The only programs that you might not be able to run are ones that autoboot from drive A. If you can't get a directory of the disk, then it probably won't run. However, autobooting programs that contain an AUTO folder will run. Programs like Time Bandit, Winter Games, and Mean 18 work just fine!

Have a Color Monitor?

ST Omnires also allows you to emulate a monochrome monitor on your color monitor! The Omnires programs automatically check to see which monitor you have. If you have a color monitor, then the program enters monochrome emulation, and if you have a monochrome monitor, it enters color emulation. Although you can use Modes 1-3 (the manual says that you can use Mode 4, but the Read.me file on the disk says you can't) every mode is identical in mono emulation mode. So...might as well pick Omnires1.prg.

Once loaded and the monochrome screen is displayed on your color monitor (and it does look very nice!), you can select from four display modes. These four modes can be cycled through at any time by pressing the SHIFT/ALT/HELP keys...even in the middle of your favorite program!

The first mode (default) is a scaled representation of the 640x400 screen. Since it's hard to squeeze 200 pixels into 400, small text tends to look

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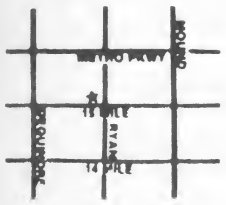

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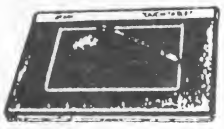

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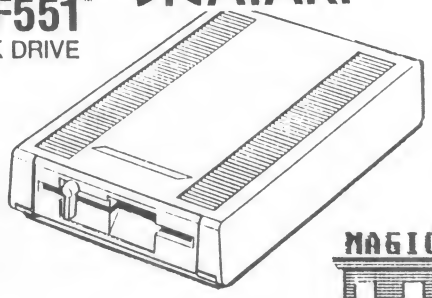

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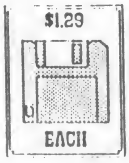

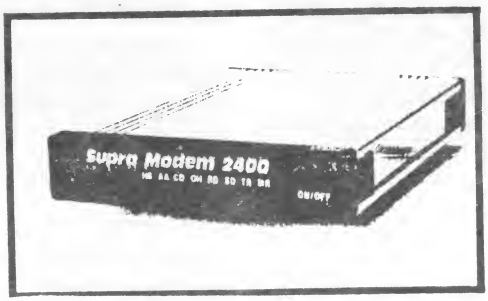

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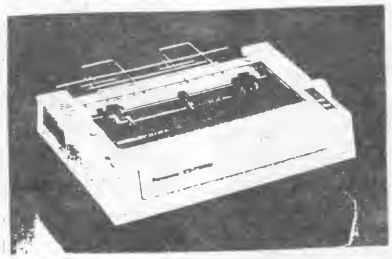

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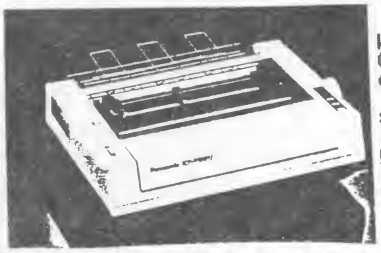

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slightly blurred. However, in most cases the Mono screen looks sharper than the corresponding color screen!

The second and third views are full-scale top and bottom views of the 640x400 monochrome screen. The most interesting of all is view 4, which is a full double-height screen which scrolls up and down by moving the mouse! You get the full 640x 400 display, and it looks terrific! Publishing Partner and Athena II looked fantastic in this mode. I tend to actually work in view 4, and switch to mode 1 for an overall picture. Power Print from Alpha Systems actually prints pictures at twice the normal resolution! As a bonus, if you use the ALT-HELP keys to do a screen dump, you get twice the resolution on your printer!

But, as the saying goes, there's no such thing as a free lunch. You will pay a small price for all of these goodies, and that price is speed. Running a simple benchmark program that timed the CPU, I tested the various modes.

Monochrome emulation mode runs approximately 20% slower than normal color mode on a color monitor. Since there are 8 modes for color emulation, I've placed the results in the following table:

PROGRAM	LOW REZ	MED. REZ
Omnires1 & 5	13.5%	25.0%
Omnires2 & 6	20.0%	27.0%
Omnires3 & 7	160.0%	29.0%
Omnires4 & 8	102.0%	27.0%

As you can see, Low rez emulation can get rather slow using Mode 4 and 8. Overall, I give the product an A+ for ingenuity and usefulness. It does it's job well and the nice little touches, like the scrolling view, make it a polished package.

ST Omnires runs on 520s, 1040s, and Megas. Documentation is rather skimpy, and printed in very tiny, blurred text. But that is the *only* thing that I can nitpick about! This package is a "gotta have!"

ST Omnires, $34.95 E. Arthur Brown Colorado. 3404 Pawnee Drive Alexandria, Minnesota 56308 (612)762-8847/763-6393.

Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing!

Review by Russell Crum (WAUGI)

COMPANY: The Software Toolworks
COMPUTER: ST and 8bit PRICE: Approx. $30

If you're looking for a way to ease your pain a bit in learning to type or need some assistance in improving your typing skills, this program may be just what the teacher ordered. This review is subjective and is not a comparison with similar programs available for the Atari or any other computer. The computer used for this review was an Atari 1040ST. The documentation states that the program is also available for the Atari 8bit, IBM, Apple II and IIGS, Amiga, and Commodore 64.

Mavis Beacon is a quite well-done program in that it makes good use of graphics and incorporates a rather good set of artificial intelligence routines. It utilizes several different techniques to assist you in improving both your speed and accuracy.

There is also an extensive set (21) of bar graph presentations on your progress, error modes, etc. that can be reviewed at any time. You start by telling Mavis your name, skill level, and length of practice sessions that you desire.

You may also set a number of other parameters such as word processor/typewriter mode (i.e. whether word wrap is invoked or the "return" key must be used at the end of each line.) You also can alter some of the criteria that Mavis uses to make decisions. You then start your "lessons."

Initially, these will follow some predetermined pattern based on the skill level that you indicated. Shortly, you will note that a lesson is aimed at resolving some particular problem pattern that you are exhibiting (at typing, that is). Each lesson states the objective and how that lesson will be conducted. You always have the opportunity to alter the lesson. Some alternatives are repeating the last lesson, skipping the proposed lesson, having Mavis chose another lesson, and making up your own lesson. You can also just have free typing practice instead of a lesson.

Lessons may consist of typing text that is presented on the screen (with several variations), typing from printed text out of the manual that comes with Mavis, and "race course" (sort of a game). Much of the time you will have a metronome running on the screen to help pace yourself. Errors are flagged both visually and with a buzzer. You may correct errors if you activated the backspace key in your setup. Each lesson concludes with indicating your speed and accuracy for that lesson. Some individual lessons are timed and are typically 2-4 minutes.

Other features include: a Help function that can be invoked any time; Keys and Fingers which will show you the correct finger to use for any key; the keyboard may be switched to the Dvorak style; the keyboard with your hands in silhouette are on the screen in most lessons (this is not in the 8bit version).

Also included on the disk is a resume writer program. This program asks you for data about yourself, then organizes the information into a

properly formatted resume. I haven't tried that feature, so I cannot comment on it. The 60-page manual contains a tutorial on learning to type, an explanation as to how the program functions, the history of the typewriter and the Dvorak keyboard, typing exercises and a bibliography.

Gripes? Yes, a few. First, the program is copy-protected. Software Toolworks will supply backup disks for $5, or a noncopy-protected version for $10.

Second, my original version (1.0) of the program tended to crash periodically, and, when typing from text in the manual, the screen text would not scroll, so after a short time you could not see what you were typing. In other modes, the lesson text is displayed on the screen and the text you type is displayed underneath.

The crashes were not every lesson, but often enough to be quite irritating (in my opinion, a commercial program like this should not crash at all!). I complained on my registration card about the crashes. I later received, unsolicited, an updated version (1.1) from The Software Toolworks. I was duly impressed!!

Incidentally, these are the same people that put out Chessmaster 2000 -- a great chess game!

Anyway, the crashing seems to have been resolved. The screen not scrolling correctly when typing external text has not. There was, and still is, an incompatibility between my ramdisk and Mavis. I've decided that is my problem though.

It is also possible that the screen scrolling problem is a conflict with one of my other accessories.

My third gripe is an irritant since I'm used to using a hard disk -- it takes about 2 minutes to load the program and data from floppy. If I weren't irritated at being charged an extra $10, I could solve this last complaint.

Does Mavis work? It sure has for me! I had made several attempts to recover my typing skills(?) of some 30+ years ago. I found that trying to follow a typing text was just too boring and it wasn't sufficient to sort out problems. I didn't want to enroll in a class somewhere (someone my age competing with people who had a real incentive to learn to type, you've got to be kidding!).

After about a month of 20-30 minute sessions, I can consistently hit 33-37 WPM, after penalties for errors. Having started as a dyed-in-the-wool two-finger typist, I feel pretty good about that!

For the most part, it has been fun. Mavis changes the lesson format often enough, isolates and has you work on specific problems quickly enough, that you feel you are making real progress.

I highly recommend Mavis to anyone who feels the need to acquire or improve their typing skills.

Super Directory from MichTron

ST Software Review by Steve Mileski (GLASS)

I have most of my software library backed up in an archived form on over a dozen double-sided disks. I was keeping track of the contents of each disk with a data manager program. Every time I added a file to one of the disks, a note was taped to the computer desk reminding me to update the data manager file. This was time consuming, awkward, and quite often inconsistent. Ah-ha! An excellent application for Super Directory (SD), a disk cataloging program written by Mark Feldman and marketed by MichTron of Pontiac, Michigan. It retails for $39.95.

So, what can SD do? Just about everything -- almost. It is GEM-based, with it's data file memory resident, so it's *very* fast! It even runs from the hard drive and is not copy-protected (yea!). How does it work? Run the program, and from the window, start by selecting (DISK option) the drive (A–P) that you want to catalog. That's right, it will even catalog your hard drive.

Now select ADD, a must on the first use. The program asks for a three-digit identifier, which can be saved to that disk or drive. After it reads in the volume label and directory of as many disks and drives as you want, it offers several options. (Now is a good time to mention that the path name has a limit of 24 characters, including backslashes, so the program will not include items buried deep in folders unless the folder names are short. This is not well documented in the manual but does tell you at ADDing time. This condition usually applies to hard drive users.) Now that you have a file to work with, you can explore some of the other options.

FIND helps you locate certain files, folders, disks, and extenders. As with all of the other options, a "search mask" must be defined like "SD.PRG" and can include pathnames. The mask also allows the use of wildcards "*" and dummies "?" like FIND "*.RSC". LOAD allows you to load in a file that was previously created for EDITing. If there is already a file in memory, then you can MERGE another existing file into it.

SAVE allows you to save the whole file or a subset (selected by FIND ALL mode, specifying something like *.PRG) of just the files you wish grouped together. EDIT lets you add remarks to the file entries. The remark can be from a predefined list (modified by the MACROS selection) with just a "point and click" or you can put in your own. You can also provide a one character category which is useful in the SORT and FIND functions. Using the Window and Window+ helps you step from data item to data item to add remarks and

catagories. PATH allows you step through the data file by pathname -- useful when your data is sorted by pathname.

PRINT is what we've been waiting for. We need hard copy of our data file for easy reference to our disk contents. Unfortunately, this function doesn't get the highest of grades. First, the good points. You can select to print only the folders, files, extenders, disk identifiers, or categories you wish by again using the search mask after having sorted by any of the above. The bad points include no "top of form" before or after printing, and the printout doesn't include any header lines, page numbers, page breaks, or time/date insertion.

All in all, my comments are as follows...the GEM interface is great! The Options are thorough. The operation is *fast!* The PRINT function is poor but useable. The documentation could be better written and more complete, but a little experimenting helps clear it up. It would be nice to have expanded Remarks capabilities. It would be nice to have a disk label-maker included. The program runs smoothly, quickly, cleanly and has good internal prompts. In spite of it's few shortcomings, it is a good, usable program. Thank you, Mark Feldman!

Take ACTION! with Your Programming!

by Gayle R. Sims (c) March 1988

ACTION!, a language development system, available on cartridge from ICD/OSS, is one of the most popular languages used today on the Atari 8bit computer.

In this series of articles, I will introduce you to ACTION!, and its many attributes, uses, and extensions. Hopefully, you will be able to grasp more than a novice's understanding of this powerful, yet easy to use, language.

In order to follow along with my articles and examples, you will only need the ACTION! cartridge itself, and the documentation that accompanies it. No other packages or utilities will be needed.

Why Should You Learn to Use ACTION!?

If you are a BASIC programmer, you have quickly learned that although your programs work just fine, they can be extremely slow and bulky. The same program, when written in ACTION!, can run up to 40 times faster! That sounds like the speed of machine language! It almost is!

ACTION! compiles your source code into machine language, allowing your program to communicate with your computer as if it were written directly *in* machine language.

ACTION! is a highly structured and modular language, unlike Atari BASIC. This lets you program module by module, concentrating on each routine individually, making your programming much neater, easier, and more efficient.

A structured and modular language also allows you use other programmers' routines (with permission of course) in your own programs, without the hassle of trying to transcribe line after line of scrambled Atari BASIC code.

An Example

Let me show you a comparison between Atari BASIC and ACTION!. The following examples will demonstrate a simple counting program in both languages.

ATARI BASIC

```
10 REM Number Counting Routine
20 FOR X=1 TO 800
30 PRINT X
40 NEXT X
50 END
```

ACTION!

```
PROC MAIN()
  INT X
  FOR X=1 TO 800
    DO
      PrintF("%I%E",X)
    OD
RETURN
```

With just three lines of Atari BASIC code being converted to ACTION! code, you can see a speed increase of about 4 percent. As your program grows, the actual running speed will increase proportionately.

Quite a difference will be noted, especially in game applications and graphic-intensive programs.

Be assured that in future articles, I will explain most aspects of ACTION!, including setting up your programming disks, learning the Editor, using the compiler, and much, MUCH more!!!

See you next time!

Ordering and support for ICD/OSS products are available by calling 815/968-2228 from 8AM to 5PM CST Monday through Friday. For more information, write to: ICD/OSS, 1220 Rock Street, Rockford, IL 61101.

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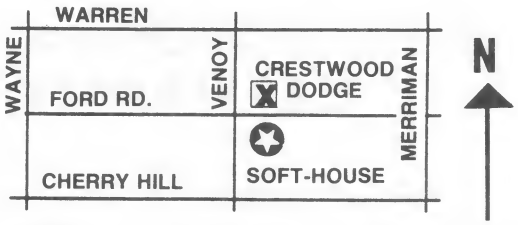

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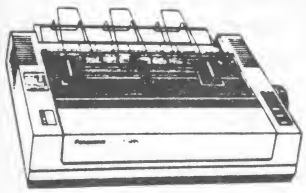

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Another Eight-bitter Bites the Dust!

by Gordon Totty, MACE (CIS 79157, 1212)

I did it. I crossed over the line, fell off the wagon, gave up the faith, succumbed to temptation, sinned in my heart (but not like Jimmy, this time), slipped on one of life's little banana peels, flew the coop, went over the wall.... yes, all of this, and more. There are so many ways to leave your lover, as Mr. Simon pointed out. Before you criticize me, though, answer where were you when I needed you? I faced this crisis all alone, and through my cursed weakness of flesh and meanness of spirit--failed. Yes, another Eight-bitter bites the big bits, because I bought a 1040ST.

That's why I haven't been around much lately. I have changed my habit patterns. I've been burning a lot of midnight oil playing with a mouse, and trying to coax it to do tricks for me. Too often, when I point at something particularly interesting and bang the little fellow on the head, the computer bombs out. I have created displays of up to ten bombs for one tiny infraction. But I'm having fun!

While I am still very new to the 1040, it might be valuable to my friends still residing entirely in Eight-bit land to read a few of my first impressions. Among these are...

The 130XE still seems to have a better keyboard for typing, at least with respect to the "feel" of the keys. Neither keyboard, by the way, has a little raised bump on the "f" and "j" keys, something IBM and others offer. This is a nice way for a touch typist to locate the home row keys with tactile assurance. I solved this on both computers with a small bit of tape on the two keys. It is amazing how little it takes to send a signal through the fingertips.

The ST has many more keys for many more uses, as I am sure you know, but also has the advantage of placing the apostrophe to the right of the semicolon, just like IBM and others. This is the biggest stumbling block as I move from one computer to the other. I have to stop and think every time I make a contraction or possessive. Other key assignments differ, too, but none cause me the problem of the apostrophe placement.

I suppose I should be embarrassed to admit that I did not know that the ST's three screen resolutions were not all available in color. The highest resolution is not. One of the things that motivated me to buy an ST was looking at a monochrome display of a word processor running on an ST. I was stunned at the clarity and crispness of the display. I leaned closer and peered through my bifocals to study each letter closely. I was looking for the fat pixels and the spaces between them, and saw none.

"Wow!" I said, and that summed it up. Double wow. It was beautiful. It is also nonexistent on the color monitor.

My early impression is that letter for letter, and considering that the 80-column display makes letters smaller than the 40-column display, I am experiencing a sensation of no better resolution doing word processing on an ST compared to my 130XE. This is a very subjective assessment, possibly influenced by bifocals and false expectations based on the monochrome display, so please don't write in to snow me with technical data. I merely caution those of you who have not crossed the big divide to consider the importance of this to you before you jump, and do some good A/B comparisons to experience it first. Avoid being disappointed like I was. Then jump; it's still worth the trip.

As for resolution, the ST's medium resolution mode is weird! There is a distortion where the vertical is exaggerated relative to the horizontal. Things look tall and skinny, distorted -- there's no better word for it. This is another disappointment. It does not show up in a lot of the commercial software as they appear somehow to compensate for this in the graphics, but text is another matter. I see this distortion in the text of my word processor, though not quite to the degree as it appears in the icons in the initial screen.

Speaking of software brings me to the major advantage of the ST. The programs are, largely, awesome. I am amazed to remember the days of the 400 with its 16K limit, and contrast them to today's ST software. It is nothing for these programs to use 200K, 300K, or more! I even have a couple of demo disks that will not run on an unexpanded 520ST. And splurging on the bytes shows in what you see on the screen and what you can do. Thank goodness for the cheap chip.

I'm going to stop here with that train of thought, as my intention is not to do a complete comparison (what would be the point!), or even to do a complete catalog of what might be right or wrong with the ST. I have shared with you what I intended: the most important of my first impressions. Unfortunately, some were strongly negative, but I am glad to be an STer. Overall, it is quite a machine!

As of this writing, Analog owes me 16 issues, as I renewed just as they ran into "printing difficulties". I am still wondering if the main printing difficulty is getting cash to the printer. So, while looking around for something else in which to read about the ST, I came across ST X-Press. By all means, get a copy of this magazine if you haven't seen it yet. It is jammed with ST news and

reviews. The two issues I have are each about 80 pages, and this is 80 pages of nearly uninterrupted text. So far, ST X-press carries very little advertising. ST X-Press just celebrated the end of its first year of publication, and I hope my favorable comments haven't given it the "kiss of death."

My regular readers (i.e., honey and the kids) will remember that I wrote a glowing review of Home Computer Monthly, just in time for that publication to die. In fact, my review may have been written after their last regular issue, although they did finish out my subscription with some less professional product. I am not complaining; they were honorable and paid off their obligation to me, which is much more than I can say about a certain not-to-be-named furniture dealer in North Carolina who took my deposit with him into bankruptcy court, and then sent me discount coupons in case I wanted to buy from his reconstructed company again! And that, friends, is what a southerner taught a northerner about the evils of reconstruction. End of history lesson.

There are bargains galore in the Atari software market. It's scary. Seems like people everywhere are practically giving away the 8bit stuff, which I am still buying. Rumor has it that unfavorable announcements about the Atari market were made by Electronic Arts and Infocom. I won't repeat any of them as I have heard and read different versions of each. These rumors may have started another round of dumping.

I was elated and depressed (a dangerous condition) by a recent ST software sale. A local merchant decided to no longer stock ST software or hardware. Sales personnel told me two reasons. First, they are very upset over what they said Atari is expecting from Mega dealers. According to them, Atari was demanding that they attend a two-week seminar at their expense and buy a $3,000 tool kit. The tool kit upset them more than the trip to the seminar.

Second, they said that the Atari software took up too much shelf space. Ouch!! This store stocks Apple software as well as Amiga and IBM. I think the comment can only mean that proportionately they are making more per foot of shelf space on the other stuff, and believe the space devoted to Atari is holding the store's profits down.

I will not name the store, as I might not have heard what I was told correctly, or I might have misinterpreted the significance of the comment about Atari software. For whatever reasons, however, this store ran one heck of an Atari sale---70% off all software. My elation, tempered by sadness at seeing another one bite the dust, came from my just happening to walk into this place at just the right time. The sale had just begun; the ad had not yet run! (Good Lord, poetry too?) I immediately grabbed about seven titles plus a book off the shelves and went back the next morning to buy six more titles. A buyer's bonanza. It felt good, but I hope I do not see any more of this.

Come on folks, I just got here!!! Let's stay in business, shall we?

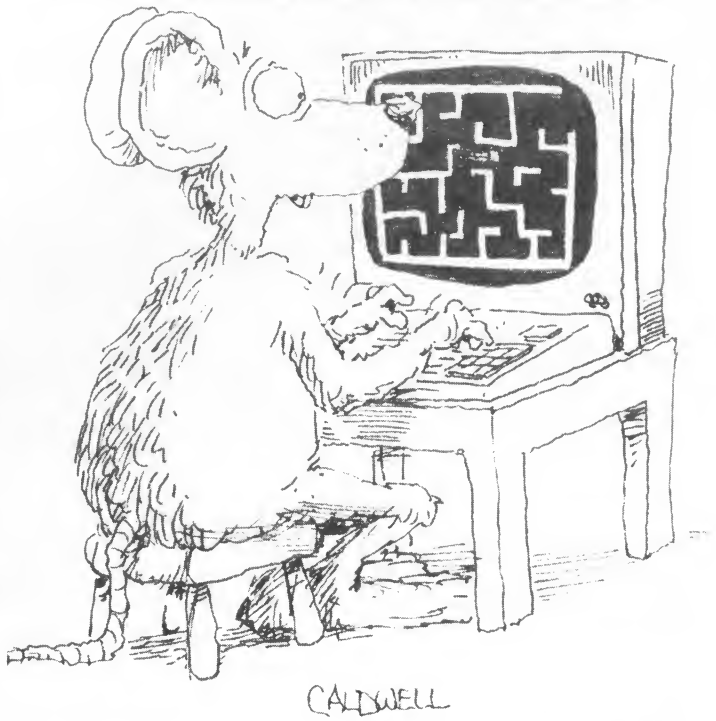
One thing that hurt was my budget. I walked away from a laser printer for less than $1,000. And I had to swallow an urge to say, "I'll take all of the software!" Wouldn't I have been a hero on rummage sale night! Or swap night, or whatever it is that we call my favorite meeting night.

Last thought for this month: Are you an "Atarist" or an "Atarian"? I'm seeing Atarist showing up in publications lately. I prefer Atarian, because it preserves the Atari name, both when pronounced and when read. I hope this doesn't turn into a group-splitting debate, like 8vs.16 you-know-whats. I plan to continue using both computers, and have already installed a data switch for both to access my printer. As for the names, whichever you choose has got to be preferable to being described by as ugly a word as "Michigander." Good grief, I'd rather be goosed!

P.S. Drop me a line on CompuServe, or on GEnie (Gordon-Totty). I'd love to get some reactions to my written rantings. Since my very first submission, when Anne McBain Ezell called me at home, I never know if I'm wasting your time or not.

As for me, I usually smile when I see my articles printed (ego trip!), then fly into uncontrollable rage if the editor changes a comma (*bigger ego trip!!*). That's not enough psychic income, folks, which may be the real gripe when people say volunteer work is "thankless." Please understand that I'm fishing for feedback, not just strokes. So, feed back, please.

P.P.S. Just kidding, editor; you give good edits!



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Upgrade your 1040ST or 520STfm just as easily as a 520ST! Send us your 520STfm and we will install the second bank of memory complete for only $119.00 plus shipping. Or install one of our 1040 memory boards and upgrade your ST to 2-1/2 or even 4 Megabytes.

Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange the expensive 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessor, etc.). No soldering is required. Upgrade any ST to 2 or 4 MB with no trace cutting and no additional parts except for DRAMs. All boards are also available with an optional realtime clock, and all boards are tested for continuity. Populated boards are tested with chips installed.

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Empire -- Wargame of the Century

ST Software Review by Bill Rayl

[Special thanks to Interstel for providing the copy of Empire used for this review.]

Requirements: 520 or 1040 ST, Color or Monochrome monitor, NOT Copy-protected

No doubt about it. Empire is the most playable war game available for the ST. Actually, to call it a "war game" is really unfair -- this game has a much broader appeal. Many confirmed anti-war gamers have gotten hooked on Empire, which traces its origins to DEC-10 mainframes where I first encountered the game.

What is Empire?

Empire is a game of strategy and skill which you and up to two opponents struggle to dominate the world. You and your opponents begin with one city on an otherwise unexplored world. Out there in the vast blackness of uncharted territory are cities to conquer, and ultimately, an enemy to defeat.

As your armies take over more cities and your empire grows, you will begin to build a navy and air force, commanding fighters, submarines, destroyers, battleships, aircraft carriers and the list goes on.

Of course, all the time your opponents have been doing the same! They're out there -- somewhere, and when you finally meet the enemy, that's when the game really beings!

Beginning the Game

Minimum requirements for running Empire are a 520 ST with either a color or monochrome monitor. The games comes on a single-sided, unprotected disk, so you can play from RAMdisk or install it on your hard drive (thank you, Interstel!). Instead of copy-protection, the game requests that you enter a "code word" from the manual (a different word each time you boot).

Once you've been cleared, the Empire desktop appears where you have three major choices -- New Game, Load and Map Editor. The Load option allows you to resume a previously saved game, and the Map Editor allows for creation of you own maps or changes to existing ones. When starting a new game, you get to choose up to three human or computer opponents. Computer opponents can be either "standard" or "expert." In one outing, I chose two expert computer opponents, and found myself fighting a two-front war, trapped between my adversaries. Needless to say, I was slaughtered.

When choosing two or three human players,

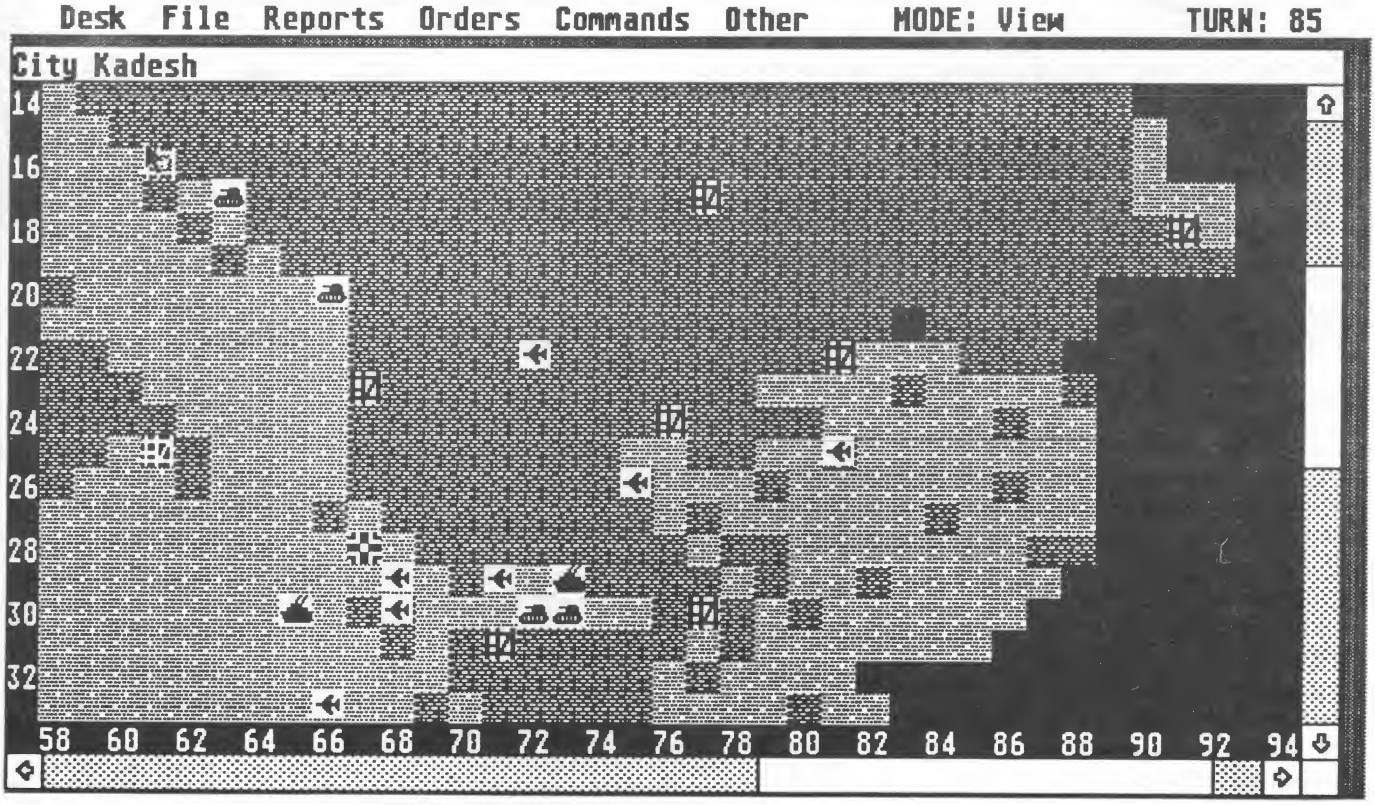


FIGURE 1 Sample Game Screen from Empire

Empire has a couple nifty features. A fundamental part of Empire is the fact that each player has no idea what the others are up to *until* the opponents stumble onto one another. With more than one player in the room, this becomes a little tricky.

Each player must take his/her turn and then turn the computer over to the next player and so on. At the outset of the game, before any real combat begins, this could look less like a strategy game and more like a game of musical chairs. Empire has a simple and effective solution -- players take multiple turns until someone encounters an opponent (usually about 100-130 turns into the game!).

Another feature for multiple human opponents is the play-by-mail option. After each turn, the game is automatically saved and can be sent to a distant friend via mail or uploaded via modem. The documentation also states that a future version of Empire will allow for interactive play via modem.

Once players are selected, you can also set efficiency rating for each player -- in essence, it's a way to set handicaps to make games more fair between experienced and novice players. You can vary combat and/or production efficiency.

Making the Moves

The game itself is easy to play, very intuitive and surprisingly fast-moving for a strategy war game. You move your armies with the arrow keys, keypad or by clicking on the place you wish your unit to be. There are also commands for setting up a patrol area or flight path, sentry duty, group commands (for moving many units), an escort command for ships to protect your troop transports, and even a command to automatically move troops in a random fashion (like real recruits) if you can't think of anything better to do!

Commands are orders can be given either by point-and-click or by keyboard input. The game comes with a handy reference card with an alphabetical listing of commands followed by the mouse of keyboard designations for those commands.

Playing for Keeps

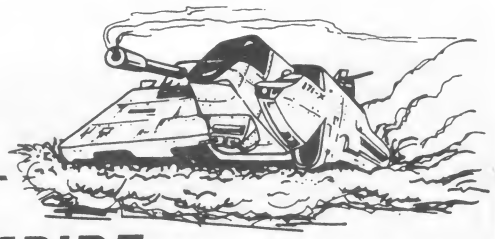
The initial moves of the game happen quickly as you explore new territory, capture cities and begin producing more troops. As the number of units you command grows, your turns take longer (group commands speed this up tremendously), but the game never bogs down. Tension actually builds with each player's army. During one campaign, I began to notice a slightly longer pause during my opponent's turns. "He must have a *huge* army," I thought, and began furiously building up my own! It's an eerie feeling knowing that the enemy is up to something and you don't know what it is.... this software knows how to capitalize on paranoia!

Empire is also very addictive and eventhough a typical game lasts the better part of a day, you just don't want to stop! You keep saying to yourself, "Just a few more moves...there's another city over there to conquer...I can't quit now while I'm in the middle of this battle...." A couple times, I've pulled myself away from a heated battle to find it's four o'clock in the morning and I've spent the last seven hours trying to take over the world.

The Empire packaging and manual both sport a warning concerning the effect Empire can have on your life. "Empire -- Wargame of the Century has been known to be addictive," the manual explains. "Interstel assumes no responsibility for lost productivity on the part of the player(s)." Before playing, I thought this was just ad hype. Was I wrong! The mainframe version was mildly addictive, but this version from Interstel is downright habitual!

The ST version of Empire is a great improvement over the mainframe version, adding many powerful new commands, more diversity and an increased playability without losing a single feature that made the mainframe version one of the most popular games around.

If you haven't figured it out by now, I wholeheartedly recommend this game to all ST owners. There is much, much more to this game than I have mentioned; I've given you a brief glimpse and the rest is up to you. As for me, I'm off to another campaign on the Barbary Coast...or maybe Southeast Asia...or maybe....



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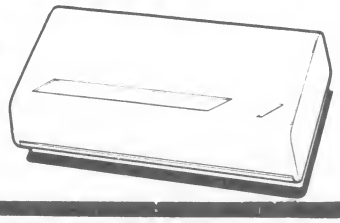

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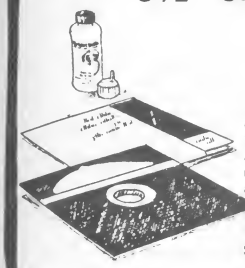

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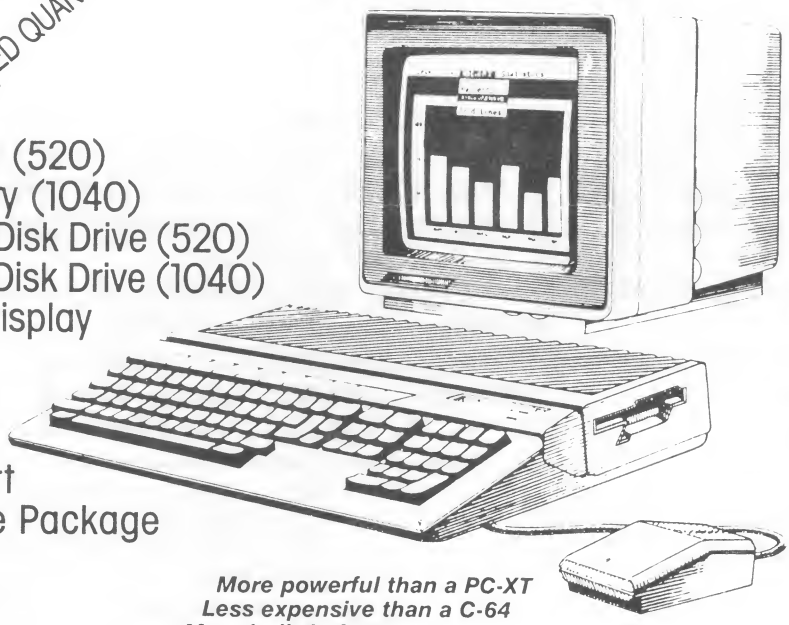

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WordPerfect: If This is Perfection, I'd Hate to See Mediocrity

ST Software Review by Rod Smith

WordPerfect 4.1 for the Atari ST
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Orem, UT 84057
(801)225-5000
$395 suggested list price
($99 with educational discount)

In the computer world, there are certain programs against which all others are measured. Lotus 1-2-3, Excel, and Infocom games, for instance, are often used as standards. In the field of word processing, one such program (at least in the MS-DOS world) is WordPerfect. Now, WordPerfect is available for the Atari ST.

WordPerfect, the ads would have you believe, represents power for the ST -- but *with* a price, unless you happen to be eligible for the educational discount. The question is: does WordPerfect for the ST deserve the reputation it has earned on the IBM? The answer is both yes and no.

Before going further, I would like to state that I first received the program in early November, but found it to be in such poor condition that I couldn't bear to review it seriously -- although I did upload what amounted to an extended and elaborated list of bugs to a couple of Ann Arbor BBSes. WordPerfect Corporation promised to have a revised version out sometime in December, so I decided to give them the benefit of the doubt and wait for that version. It is this revision, delayed, the Jan. 8 version, which I now review.

First the good news: WordPerfect does indeed offer a great deal of word processing power. Many companies and, I suspect, many purchasers of word processors, seem to think a few flashy features such as a built-in real-time spell checker or an outline processor make a great word processor. They do not. I have found in using perhaps half a dozen word processors on the ST as well as programs on other machines, what really counts are the little things. Does a program allow searches for carriage returns? Can it handle soft hyphens? Does it have a cursor move by word function? These are the sorts of features which distinguish the truly great programs from those which are merely flashy.

True, such major features as a spell-checker or macro facility don't hurt, but they are less important in my own day-to-day use of a program than these minor features which often don't make it into the magazine advertizements.

WordPerfect offers such small but important features. The only other ST word processor with which I am familiar which offers a similar lineup is The FinalWord, which is an awkward dinosaur of a program in most respects. (In fairness, I have not seen the latest offerings from the 1st Word and Word Writer lines.)

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Since a list of WordPerfect's minor, but important, features would be tedious, I will not detail them.

Some of the major features are a macro facility for easily executing a series of commands, a spell-checker (not a real-time one), thesaurus, multiple columns, a built-in print spooler, footnotes and endnotes, table of contents preparation, index compilation, and, of course, use of GEM. If you rely on your word processor for more than letters to Aunt Matilda, WordPerfect probably offers something desirable which the competition does not.

Before the serious word processing junkies begin trembling with anticipation though, there is a downside. Expressed succinctly, WordPerfect is the buggiest program I have ever seen on any computer, with the exception of programs in the midst of being written. The program will occasionally lock up or restrict one's actions for no apparent reason; the automatic backup option kicks in only when a function is selected; the program will behave insanely if you load a 1st Word or ST Writer file; and so on. Most of these bugs existed in the earlier version; a couple are new to the January release.

To their credit, WordPerfect has fixed what I consider to be the two most obnoxious bugs in their product, but the program is still frustrating to use. This could especially be the case to the new user attempting to set up the program. Although I had done it before with the earlier version, I could not get the printer selection process to work correctly. I finally called WordPerfect's 800 customer support line, and managed to get my printer installed. A novice user, however, might simply have given up in frustration.

Aside from the bugs, there are a number of design features which are questionable. WordPerfect does not use the bit-mapped display of the ST to the fullest; superscripts and subscripts are not displayed as such, even on a monchrome system, and page breaks are shown by a line of "-"s or "="s, depending upon the type of page break.

The scroll bar behaves in a nonstandard and confusing way. The standard Atari file selector box is not used in the program, so that you must often enter the entire pathname by hand. You may or may not be able to open multiple windows on a 512K machine. Macros are stored in the currently-selected directory, a serious problem for those with many directories of text files. And so on.

While some of these problems are minor, others cause a great deal of annoyance. The file selector box problem is particularly annoying to me, especially since, when I spoke to somebody at WordPerfect Corporation about it, he could not understand why I found their design so inferior to GEM's.

So what does this make the bottom line? I feel that most people should avoid WordPerfect. It is not worth $395, or even half that, as is, unless you're really desperate for a program with WordPerfect's power. Those eligible for the educational discount (principally students and educators) might consider the program, but only if they *need* the power. Beginners should avoid the program like the plague. Most people would be happier with Word Writer, or perhaps the new version of 1st Word (although, as I have said, I have yet to see the latest versions of these programs). Perhaps in a year or so, WordPerfect will have fixed most of the bugs in the program, and maybe even addressed some of the design flaws. Until that time, however, I must sadly conclude that, despite its unsurpassed power, WordPerfect on the ST is not the program for most people.

[Author's Note: Since I wrote this article, I've received yet another update to my WordPerfect package. This version seems much improved over the version I reviewed, and I have yet to make it crash. The package is now approaching useability by the more advanced user, but I still suggest the novice stay away from this software.]

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M X E D N I E I W U R K P T U
A D D A U T E X T A U E N D L
N M U L U C K E Y E R I D U A
I F U N C T I U N S R R G R C
K U D G P I X E D P E A U U I
E R N N R K N A L B R G T W G
Y M U S B A T W L I M U V E U
B A U A L R P A T U G R D E L
U T R I U A N H V T A I G L A
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A L I N E S R I L N S N T M U
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L E F T A H U M E Y D T T I S
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ADD
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LINES
LOCK
LOG
LOGARITHMS
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ROW
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C.H.A.O.S. is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's SOciety is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (ATASCII/ASCII) serving both the 8 and 16bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and so on, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership are held several times a year. Eight-bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings are held monthly. The S.T. INterest Group meets on the Second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800, and XL/XE owners, takes place on the Third Saturday of the month. All meetings are held at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOSsponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and Appointed Officers of CHAOS

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	John Baker	641-4430
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
16bit Rep	John Johnson	337-7772
Membership	Gary Ferris	393-2593
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
Libr	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Pub.Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Co.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

Presidential Address

Welcome to March, blustery weather and the start of spring! I have several things to bring to your attention this month. First, the tardiness of your MAM last month was our fault. Several miscues resulted in our mailing the issues for CHAOS members adding a week to 10 days to mailing time. Second, a reminder. The March 8bit meeting is displaced by our Annual meeting. This year we are not only electing officers, we will also consider several adjustments and two amendments to the bylaws of the club.

In a sense, the March meeting is the most important of the year. Each of the elected positions is

filled at the annual meeting, perhaps by re-electing the incumbent, or by electing someone new. In any event you will have no voice unless you are there. ST SIG members will elect their member at large at their March SIG meeting. ST members should also attend and vote at the March 19 meeting.

At this writing I am still considering whether to run for re-election. I am contemplating going back to school and earning my bachelor's, in which case I will not be able to continue as president. Otherwise, I am likely to run. That's not to say that others shouldn't run as well, of course.

As far as I know, the office of vice president needs nominees, Gary Ferris intends to run for re-election, and the 8bit member at large is in need of a nominee. I will present details of the responsibility of each position, and the management structure of the club, before the vote at the meeting.

As for the bylaws, we will be considering several adjustments and two amendments. The adjustments and amendments are intended to address some weaknesses we found in recent analysis of the bylaws. The major changes, of course, are the two amendments. In a nutshell, the first amendment clarifies the manner in which an office may become vacant. The second amendment deals with dissolution of the club. We are not of course envisioning this as a necessity for the near future, but we feel it is an eventuality for which we must prepare.

As you can see, the March 19 Annual Meeting is of great importance to the Club. I hope you'll be there and help chart our future.

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Other news concerns MAXIT-'88, on April 17 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Clarion Hotel. MAXIT is a local computer show built on past shows put on by several different organizers. As it was last year, the emphasis is on local dealers. However, the organizers have pressed the retailers to offer deals, deals, deals.

And unlike last year, there are several local Atari dealers, most of whom plan to be there. Look for discount deals, and more, from Computer Concepts, Castle Communications, Computer Emporium, Babbages, and perhaps Schubert Corporation.

CHAOS will have five tables, one of which we hope to dedicate to MIDI, the others to the disk libraries, demonstrations, and publicity materials. So, as always, we need volunteers to provide equipment and time. These shows offer an opportunity for membership growth, at a reasonable cost. Give me a call and pitch in with equipment or time.

CHAOS BBS Goes 2400 Baud!

Due to two different Avatex modem failures, we were faced with buying a new modem for the BBS. Although 2400 baud is not common, it is certainly on the upswing. So, we went the extra mile and bought a Smarteam 2400. Sadly, the first one shipped was defective and is being replaced, to be online sometime in the first week of March. Meanwhile, continue to join us on the CHAOS BBS, (517) 371-1106, at 300/1200 baud (using John Nagy's modem. much to his chagrin!)

Library News

The rental program has been a continuing success, and Library Manager John Baker is in the process of revising the disk library rental rates to reflect the huge growth in both the ST and 8bit libraries. The new rates are to be announced at the March General Meeting.

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal Computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut Schol, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive (Near Atherton and Hammerburg Rd.). During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday workshop at 9:30am. Membership is $15 and includes a subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine.

Meeting dates

March 9	**General**	**March 26**	**Saturday**
April 13	**General**	**April 23**	**Saturday**

GAG Information:
Jerry Cross 736-4544
FACTS BBS 736-3920

President's Report

Finally! The catalogs are done, and you should be receiving them any day now. Sorry it took so long, but as you will see, there was a lot of work to do before we could send them (and they are already out of date!).

When you get your catalog, you will notice there is a questionnaire enclosed. Please take a few minutes to fill it out. It has been quite a while since we polled our members. We have no way of knowing what sort of equipment you have, or plan to buy. Heck, I'm not even sure how many of you own STs! So this survey is quite important. It will give us an idea what direction we should take the club and ideas on how to get there. What sort of programs are you interested in? How do you like Atari's dealers, service, products, etc..? What can the club do to help you learn about your computer?

But, unless you take that couple of minutes to fill out the survey and mail it back (we even sent an envelope!) we will not be able to plan anything. So please! Help us out. The results of our survey will be sent to Atari, local dealers, and anyone else who is interested.

See you at the next meeting.

Jerry Cross

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus. Dues are $20/yr.

President	Frank Fellheimer 657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs
Treasurer	Dave Bryant
Librarian	Steven Buechler
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ST Chairman	Jim Zinke
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GKAUG BBS	(616)657-2665

Second meeting underway already and we had 16 members attending even after the "Big" snow storm of '88. First item on my list is to correct the telephone number for the GKAUG. I put down my home phone number...the BBS is not in my home, but I got a lot of calls...thank goodness you guys don't call at 3:00 in the morning.

Communications with the WAUG! group in Ann Arbor has produced a copy of the Cute Label program which I am having a little trouble with since I haven't figured out how to change the defaults for my Prowriter printer, however, it is compatible with the Epson series and will be available through our Archiver on our next meeting, March 12. Be there for this one, we will be doing a demo. It is easy to use with lots of fonts available.

We had a quantity of Analog magazines donated by Maggie Connell and the Librarian will soon have a listing of them so you will be able to request the ones you want. Since our reference library is getting large (and heavy) we will no longer bring it to the meeting. The disk library will be available and we will bring those magazines or books you request. Call me or Steve if you have any requests.

We did a short demo of "Tax Advantage." It seems easy to use, with plenty of menus. It's the time of the year to be looking at such programs. We also have a WAUG! listing of ST programs for you 16bit hackers. Zinke has the listing and will likely select something of use for our users. We haven't forgotten to include the ST users. Join us to get updated on our latest progress.

Next month:

1. Discussion on the use of the Merit BBS system.
2. Demo some basic utilities.
3. Demo Cute Label program.

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS', Michigans only 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

From the Desk of the President

Ahhhh, February....the Monday of the months! This month's general meeting featured MIDI, which was enjoyed by all. Thanks, Mike Gillie!

We also closed the collection for ARC and ARCshell contributions for the authors of those public domain and shareware programs. I am pleased to announce we will be sending out over $40. Next software to be collected for will be Lablejrb.prg by the Pittsburg Area Computer Enthusiasts (PACE). This program will be demonstrated at the March meeting by Byron Johnson, who will also write up a review and general instruction sheet to help you evaluate and operate it. It will be available in our public domain library.

Each month, the meeting will feature a seminar of some type of application and/or software. The March meeting demo, hopefully, will feature Juggler from MichTron. Juggler is a new multi-tasking program that allows you to have several programs running concurrently. The seminar will show the finer points of using DBmaster.one and Basetwo. These are two look-alike data manager programs for maintaining

files like addresses, recipes, collections and much more.

At the April meeting, we hope to show Super Directory, a disk cataloging program from Mich-Tron. See the SD review in this issue. The April seminar will be on using Publishing Partner, a popular desktop publisher, starting from text and graphics input, all the way to printer output.

In the near future (May maybe?), we will attempt to have Jonathan Kring, author of Personal Money Manager, tell us how to use double-entry bookkeeping in his program. This will also be applicable to many other financial programs.

Let us know if you have a favorite application or program that you would like to see a training seminar on. The seminars will be held in a separate room, and if you are not interested in the current month's fare, there will be open use of the other two computers in the general room.

So, the following is a (hoped for) agenda for the next several months at GLASS:

March Demos; Lablejrb (pub.dom.) and Juggler
Seminar; DBmaster.one and Basetwo
April Demo; Super Directory
Seminar; Publishing Partner
May Demo; (?)
Seminar; Personal Money Manager (?)

I hope you find seminar formats interesting and informative. Don't forget, each month one attending member will receive free, a purchased piece of software, and another member will receive the library's disk-of-the-month. At the February meeting, DUNGEON MASTER was taken home by Louis Fox. (Sorry Ken Settle, if you would have been here you would have gotten it!) The Disk-Of-The-Month went to Ed Hanson. Thank you, Byron Johnson, for re-submitting the software for drawing, after you won it!

See you at the MARCH meeting!

Steve Mileski

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

President's Comments

A big thanks to all! It's great having the participation and enthusiasm we have in GRASS. Everyone's pitching in to do whatever is needed to get the job done. It sure makes my job easier. First off, I must apologize to Gerry Borysiak for listing him last month as Gary. I wish I could blame the computer, but we all know I can't! Sorry, Gerry.

Your board met on January 20th to organize for the year. The following are some of the more important items discussed.

1. outlined officers duties
2. will start putting meeting in paper and on cable TV
3. laid groundwork for BASIC programming seminar
4. laid groundwork for Atari Fare in April
5. discussed having a swap table(s) at May meeting 6. support of STs -- still in the air
7. monthly membership meeting programs -- Gary Heitz is in charge
8. membership chairman – new member packet
9. periodic demo of new software and raffling it off at meeting -- first one is April
10. better exchange of information

We will keep you up-to-date on these and other items as they develop. At the April meeting, we will have our first demonstrated software which will be then raffled off. Chuch Baughman has purchased News Station, and within 15 or 20 minutes had a really good-looking "newspaper" page. He is ordering another copy which he will demo. Raffle tickets will be $1 each or 3 for $2. If you absolutely, positively, under no circumstances cannot attend the meeting, send me a buck or two, and I will make sure your name is in the hat!

Speaking of demos, Joe Mann did a fantastic job at our February meeting demostrating his "lotto" type game. The graphics and colors were outstanding. Joe also gave us a very interesting and informative talk on some of his programming secrets he used to write "Lotto."

Tim Feenstra has agreed to be our Membership Chairman. He is also working on a "New Member packet." It will consist of a copy of the bylaws, library catalog, our questionnaire/membership list, etc. I think this will help new members become part of the group faster. Two more people joined last month. Roy and Laura McClure are from Jenison and enjoy their new system. Welcome!

Gerry Borysiak is chairman of our Atari Faire scheduled for a Saturday in April. Generally, the format will include the demonstration of various Atari computers (probably including STs), different kinds and manufacturers of peripheral hardware and software from games to word processing and databases. We will also have available some of the better public domain software for sale. Gerry will need a lot of help putting this faire together. He will be calling us to lend a hand and for the use of our systems at the Faire.

The BASIC programming seminar is being chaired by Steve Gilbert. He is busy putting all the loose ends together. One big headache is where to meet. The Wyoming Library is booked, so we are looking. Call Steve if you know a place.

Everyone will be notified when the details are finalized.

The suggestion was made that we keep our hardware database up-to-date. We will attempt to do this. A sheet will be at the March and April meetings, so you can indicate what hardware you no longer have and what you have purchased since the questionnaire. Blank questionnaire forms will be available at the meetings for those who did not participate the first time. Again, if you can't make the meeting, drop me a line.

George Nosky, 616-942-1527,
2440 Parkridge SE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

GRASS Meeting February 3, 1988

President:	George Nosky
Vice President:	Gary Heintz
Secretary:	Marvin Waid
Librarian:	Chuck Baughman

At this meeting, there were approximately 25 to 30 people in attendance. Joe Mann demonstrated a basic program that he created called "LOTTO." There were a lot of interesting features that this program would do. It would pick 6 different random numbers without picking the same number twice. You could also "cheat" and try your number and see how many tries it would take to choose your picks. I think Joe did an excellent job of not only creating this program, but also of displaying it. Great news, he gave a copy to the library!

After this demo, we discussed BASIC programming and how we want to proceed. Steve Gilbert will take charge of this. Time and dates as to when this will happen have not yet been set. Topics discussed were making programs do what we want, taking apart programs and hands-on experience. Contact Steve if you would like to participate.

Supporting the ST was tabled for now because there is already an ST group that meets in the Grand Rapids area. We may wish to contact them to be involved in the Atari Faire coming up in April. Tim Feenstra volunteered to introduce new members and to distribute a packet that would include a questionnaire, by-laws, etc. We are also thinking of sending letters to members who haven't been around for a long time to see if they are still interested in their 8bit Atari.

In April we will be raffling off tickets for some software. I believe it is the "News Station." This is a good way to support the club and possibly gain something for yourself. Chuck Baughman will demonstrate News Station in April. More demos to come later on....

Updating the By-laws will be discussed in March as George has already given me a preliminary copy of proposed changes. Next GRASS meeting is March 2nd. Hope to see you there.

Marvin Waid

M.A.C.E. Journal

1988 MACE Meeting Dates

Officer	General
March 4	March 22
April 8	April 19
May 6	May 17
June 10	June 21
July 8	July 19

All General meetings are held in room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10 1/2 mile road and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30. For further info, write to MACE, PO Box 2785, Southfield, Michigan 48037

From the MACE President

HEADACHE #69

For a while I wondered if we were going to be able to have a February meeting; many of the people who were to do presentations called and cancelled at the last minute. Fortunately, Jim Steinbrecher and Bob Retelle put on excellent demos (as usual) for us.

EPSON PURCHASE

The group purchase of Epson printers was cancelled because we found out we could now buy them "over the counter" for less than the original group purchase offer. Epson seems to be one of the few companies who are constantly lowering their prices while turning out top quality products. I don't know what their secret to success is, but I wish the auto manufacturers would try to discover it too.

VISITING CLUBS

We've had an increase in the number of visitors from other clubs. We welcome all of you and enjoy your company. We also welcome demos and presentations by other clubs -- in fact, some of our most interesting demos have been by other clubs.

ANTIC MAGAZINE

Some local clubs are not taking advantage of Antic's recent offer of a discounted disk/magazine subscription. They indicated they were boycotting Antic because Antic implied that MACE is a bunch of pirates for having Antic software in our BBS download sections (as did most other Atari clubs in North America). We appreciate your support, but MACE has no ill feelings toward Antic over this topic. Although we feel their letter to us was poorly worded or poorly thought out, we don't believe it was intended to be as insulting to MACE as it turned out. It was simply the result of the let-

ter's author trying to be an amateur lawyer and sticking his foot in Antic's mouth. Antic is a fine magazine; MACE wants you to feel free to enjoy it.

ANALOG MAGAZINE

Lee Pappas of Analog called me and promised to send me a letter explaining what's happening to Analog. The letter, like their magazine, never arrived. Lee also said we should be receiving the April issue of Analog in late March. I should mention that Lee had to make several calls to get in touch with me. His persistence may indicate that Analog is trying harder in 1988. However, I still recommend you don't renew your Analog subscription until you get everything you paid for in 1987.

SPECIAL MEMBERS

I had the great pleasure of giving out two "MACE Appreciation Awards" at the February meeting. These awards are for members who have quietly but continually put in a lot of work to keep our club going, often without any thanks from anyone. The awards were given to Gordon Totty, who has given us years of humorous reading, and Allen Bargen, who writes the excellent monthly column, "Flying The ST." We may forget to mention it to you Allen and Gordon, but we appreciate what you've done for us. Thanks from all of us.

MEETING THEMES

Our March meeting is Printer Graphics night. We'll show you how to make color prints on any Epson printer, how to make graphic labels, how to use different fonts on your Epson printer and how to use Printshop. Then we'll top it off with a sale on our 17 disks of PrintShop icons and 87 disks of pictures. April's meeting will cover home productivity programs such as: mailing labels, mortgage amortization, and easy databases. May, of course, is the birthday party. The theme will be fun and socializing. June's theme will be word processing and will feature demos of the more popular word processors and spelling checkers.

As always, your questions about any Atari subject will be welcomed at any meeting even if the question doesn't fit that night's theme. MACE wants to help you make your Atari more useful and enjoyable for you.

Don Neff

Meeting Minutes

The general meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was called to order on February 16, 1988 at 7:43 p.m. by President Don Neff. Don started the meeting by announcing that many of the people who were to do presentations called and cancelled at the last minute, but that we were going to have a good meeting because of Jim Steinbrecher and Bob Retelle who volunteered to do demos. Don also said the next meeting would be March 22 instead of March 15 (one week later).

Jim Steinbrecher gave a demo of his conversion of an Action! game called "Action Max" for use with the 8bit Atari. It's a new game concept using a TV, VCR, computer and an Atari light gun. Jim said the conversion would not be on the market until this spring. There are four tapes available, and each tape runs about 15 minutes and cost $20.00. Another game Jim demonstrated was called "Sonic Fury" and two boys along with Richard Racusin volunteered to play. They all agreed that Jim made it look a lot easier than it was.

Next Paul Wheeler did two game demo's for the ST. First he showed "Flight Simulator" and then Doug Dagley and Irene Church volunteered to play Wheel Of Fortune."

Don mentioned that Jerry Cross is trying to organize a trip to CES in Chicago and those interested should see Jerry. No one expressed an interest in the Antic offer so the subject was dropped. The group purchase of Epson printers was cancelled because we could now buy them "over the counter" for less than the original group purchase offer.

Don announced MACE East is up. The system is operating at 300/1200 baud, and the number is 978-1685.

Don said Lee Pappas of Analog Magazine called him and confirmed they are being bought out. Mr. Pappas promised to send Don a letter explaining what's happening to Analog. Don said again this month that MACE members are not writing articles for the MAM magazine. Persons wishing to submit articles may upload them to MACE WeST 582-0657, MACE East 978-1685, Molin's Den 420-0407, or The Treasure CheST 973-9137. If you don't have access to a modem, you may submit articles to any officer, who will see that they get to Journal Editor Pattie Snyder-Rayl.

Two certificates of appreciation were awarded to special members. The first one went to Gordon Totty for his support of MACE and the many excellent articles he has written. The second award was presented to Allen Bargen for his column "Flying The ST."

Bob Retelle demoed "Dungeon Master", an ST game of good and evil. After his demo he hosted a question and answer period. Don passed out fliers about a computer swap shop and told all members that if they have never gone to one they should. He mentioned that he has picked up Atari books at these shows for two and three dollars each.

The meeting ended at 9:32.

(Special Thanx! to Sharie Middlebrook and Heather Neff who recorded the meeting minutes inmy absence!)

Mike Olin

Notice! In the February issue of MAM, I (LeRoy Valley) mentioned a program called MEDCOPY in ST Notes. This program is a copy of Procopy 1.31 with a facelift. It is *not* a public domain program! If you see it on a BBS, please delete it!!

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: March 12, April 16, 1988. Officers of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Steve Volker	ST Disk Lib.	793-2955
George Stuart	NewsLetter Ed.	892-7545

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bit and the ST, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 140 disks in the 8-bit library and 40 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks *at no charge* if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

Hot Flashes from the Future!

March has more to offer than just the promise of spring...it's a meeting packed full of adventure for us eight-bitters! Al Jennings will demo Auto Duel by Origin. This three disk game can be purchased for less than $35.00. Auto Duel is not just another wrist-wrenching joystick buster, but a game that takes a bit of preplanning and practice. Auto Duel has the potential to become an 8bit classic.

Just don't seem to have enough time? Did that last job take longer than expected? Well, maybe Bob Schindehette has just what the Boss ordered -- Project Planner from Antic magazine.

Project Planner is in the November issue and free for the typing. Also, if all goes according to plan, as you walk through the door you should see the Atari XEP80 and a monochrome monitor!

On the ST side, LeRoy Valley will be demoing Digisound ST by Alpha Systems. This sound digitizer allows you to sample real world sounds, voices, or music at 5K to 40K per second! Sounds created on the digitizer can be played back through the monitor or used in your own programs! Be on hand to see this interesting piece of hardware!

Relics to Relish

The meeting date was voted on and unanimously approved to be moved to the last Saturday that falls on or before the 17th of the month. This will allow the magazine maximum time to reach us. The first changed meeting will be in April. (Just read your meeting notes!) Hmm...what did I do with my issue of Antic? I think a repeat has the old Atari 800 for $79.00, na, maybe I can still get an Omnimon chip and keep my 130XE. But then again, I can just use the translator to boot Data Perfect that Char Davis showed and save my money for a 2400 baud Supra modem ($179.95 list) that Al Jennings brought to the meeting.

Char showed us that the Atari 8bit is not *just a game machine,* but a computer with enough power to get the job done. Al Jennings showed us his new Supra Modem. He really couldn't show much, it's just a little box and you can't see how it works with out a phone line, so he held it in the air and everybody went 'Wow neat!'

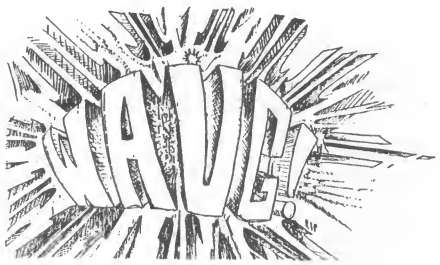
The best news came when LeRoy asked for a volunteer as NewsLetter Editor and lo and behold Don Sutherland and said "I'll do it!" Now you see that presented a problem because Don wasn't a member, so everybody turned to Don and said "do you have a modem?" No, but Marty said "That's no problem, just pay me 20 bucks (Marty, the treasurer) and I'll link my 8bit and ST together. If you would be so kind as to bring the newsletter over to my house." And that's the story of how Don became the Newsletter Editor. The end.

On the ST side, Marty Schmidt demoed Regent Base 1.1, a very powerful and, (judging from the demo) very complicated database. This database allows a user to totally customize his or her own database. You can (read *must*) design the actual screens to display the data through an extensive command language. You also design all of your own printouts, and have complete control over how your data is handled. The price that is paid for all of this flexibility is that the user had better enjoy dabbling in programming at least a little. All in all, Regent Base, while requiring lots of user work (and frustration) ends us displaying databases with a *very* polished look. This package would be great for developing custom applications for businesses.

LeRoy Valley then provided the ST members with another disk of the month called "February Freebies." This is starting to become a regular thing! On the disk were goodies such as Shadow (mentioned in last month's ST Notes), DCFormat in an accessory version (yeah!), and a demo of Gauntlet.

Expiration Notice: Check the label on your MAM. If it says "Last Issue" next to the date, then you need to renew. Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive *no* more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

8bit Equipment Volunteers: Ted Beauchamp, Nelson Greene. ST Equipment Volunteers: Dennis Wright, Leroy Valley. Once again, a big thanks to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.



From The Prez...

At the February meeting, member Brian Hall suggested WAUG! consider holding meetings during the summer months because we do not traditionally meet in July and August. Originally, the membership was made up of students who, it was felt, would be out of town. And so it was...

But that was then and this is now. It appears, from the informal poll conducted at the meeting, that WAUG! now consists of a number of members who really would like to meet during the off months. Personally, I support the idea, mostly because it seems apparent this is what the members want, but also because I find the two-month "vacation" to be too long. There are, however, many things to be considered:

1) The dues, as they are currently structured, will not sufficiently cover the cost of maintaining membership in the club. Members will have to consider an increase in rates with additional room rental costs and copies of MAM. For the record, 10 issues of MAM cost the club $8.00/yr/member. As it stands now, the club has only $2.00/yr/ member (plus revenue from disk sales) to apply to other expenses throughout a year. One can see the officers were soon going to be pressed to request an increase in dues *anyway.*

2) There needs to be more member involvement in normal club operations. Additional work involved in planning two more meetings will not crush the current executive board, but help from the members would ease the load all the way around. (I am thinking, for example, that Pattie would probably appreciate a volunteer to get the monitor while she is busy arranging seating, or vice versa. And the librarians would probably appreciate help for an hour or two between meetings to copy disks and develop bundles. The list is endless!) Here's a suggestion: ask any officer "What can I do to help?" If the answer is "Nothing," attribute it to shyness and ask again!

3) The members will need to offer more suggestions on proposed topics of discussion at monthly meetings. The night always seems to go by so quickly, we *have* had many good demonstrations in the past, but the prearranged topic is not cast in stone. If there is something else you would like to discuss outside the current topic, make sure an officer knows.

As promised, the officers will discuss the possibility of additional meetings at their next meeting, and we will pursue the topic again in the March general meeting. As always, the officer meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month, at approximately 7:30p.m. Members are welcome/ encouraged to attend! Contact an officer to find out where the next officer meeting is held.

The March meeting topic is Business Applications. And don't forget the meetings will now promptly start at 7:00 instead of 7:30p.m.

Michael Olin

General Meeting: February. 9, 1988

It was Games Night at WAUG!, and we were treated to quite a batch of games for the 8bit available in our disk library. Mike Pieronek, the 8bit librarian, clutched the joystick desperately while pretending to have a good time as game after game left him dead, maimed or at least popcornless. In all fairness, there were a couple games where he appeared to have some possibility of surviving; but, at least one of those (Mazewar) was when the game was in demo mode, so the computer was actually surviving. As for the others, maybe he just didn't admit to putting them in demo mode...

Then, for the ST Bob Retelle treated us to "Dungeon Master," which is a recently released commercial game from FTL with incredibly detailed graphics and nice digitized sound, such as the rather unseemly noises from one's stomach after munching down a piece of monster. Apparently this game is so hot that it's generating *lots* of messages on the major telecom services like CompuServe and GEnie.

On more business-related topics, there was discussion of the following:

1) Whether the club should distribute newsletters (MAM) at the meetings and then just mail out those that aren't picked up. This would save on postage, but it would mean receiving it a little later (except for those who haven't been receiving it by the day of the meeting).

2) At the next meeting the "Basic Turbocharger" package will be raffled off. This is a collection of 167 machine language routines in string form, with documentation, that can easily be incorporated into your Basic code to speed up many functions (such as reading or writing picture files).

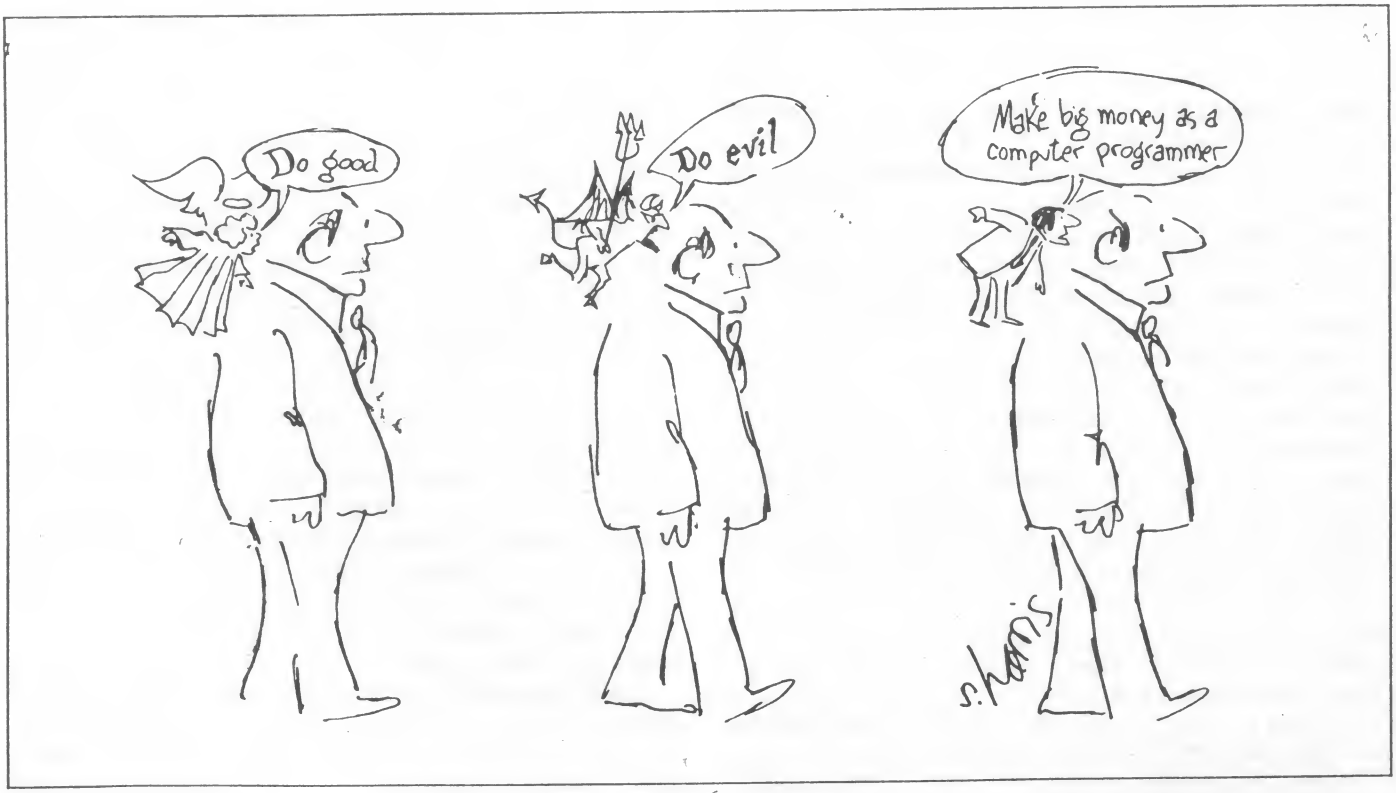
3) Since the big monitor we use at meetings always has to go at 9:00, we decided to attempt starting the meetings at 7:00 instead of 7:30 to allow more demo time.

4) The possibility of at least one meeting in the summer was brought up and will be discussed further by the officers. (WAUG! has traditionally not met in July or August.)

The End.

Our team has been selected to find an inexpensive substitute for accuracy."

"Frankly, Mrs. Pilkins, it'll be a lot easier for you to pay the $27,300 telephone bill than it will for us to find the mistake."



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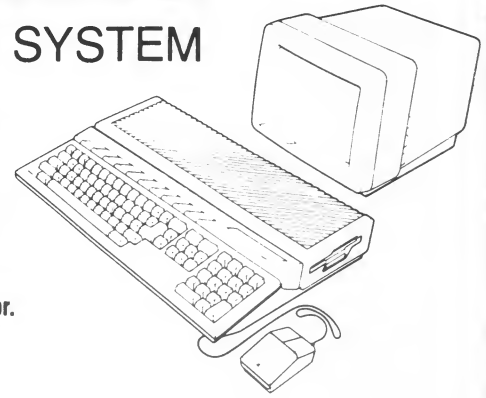

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April 1988

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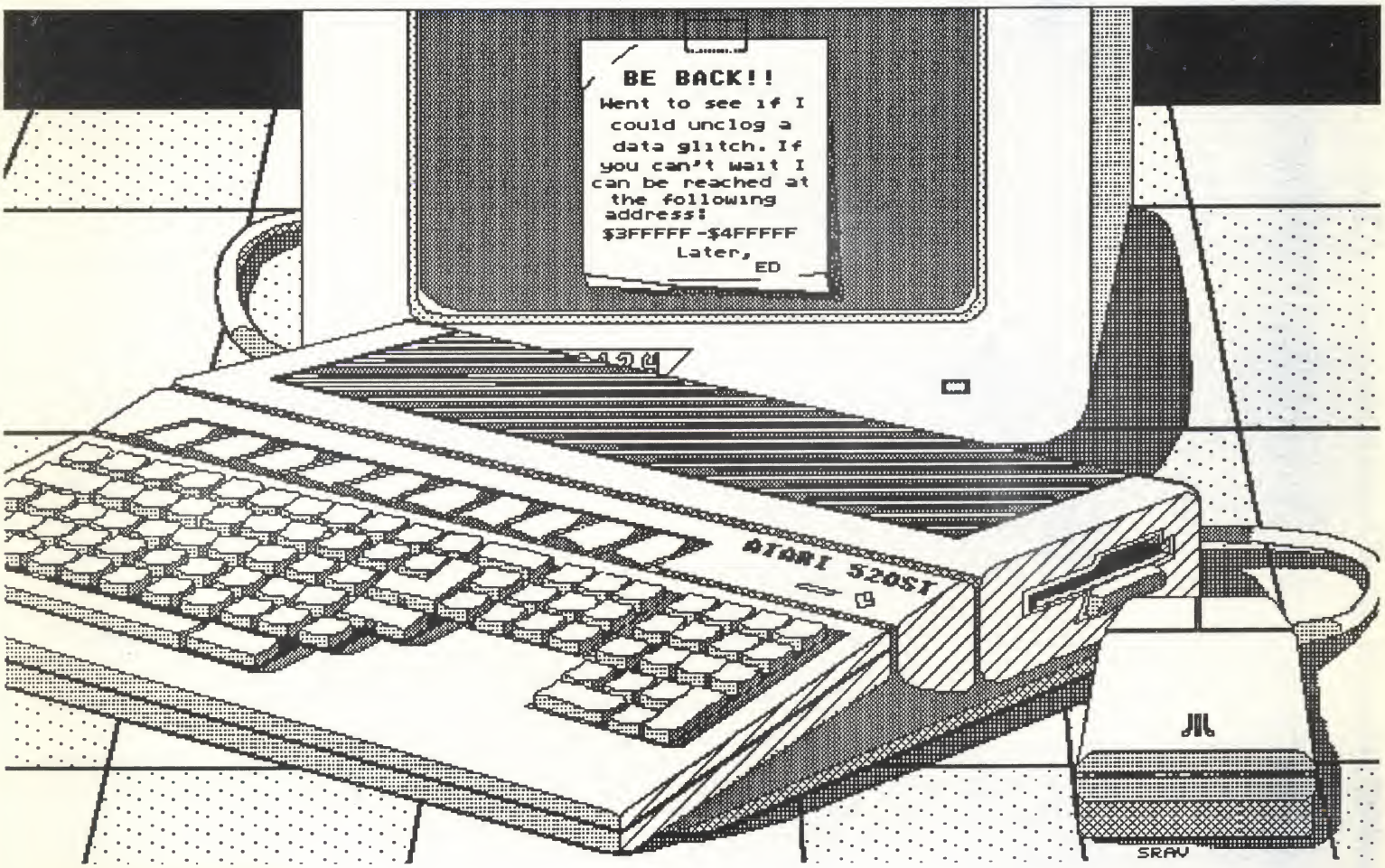
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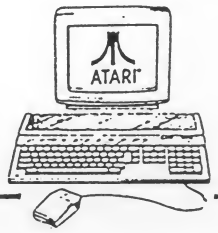

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MAM this Month

Vol. 3 No. 4
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Features

From the Reader's Viewpoint 2
Atari News and Comment 3
Lock and Key for the ST 4
Vos Ist DOS? A Refresher Course (8bit) 6
SpartaDos Construction Set Review (8bit) 8
Take Action! with Your Programming (8bit) 9
ST Notes: Digisound ST from Alpha Systems 10
Gone Fish'n from Interstel (ST) 13
Building a Digital Logic Probe 14
Do-it-yourself Atari 8bit Keyboard Repair 15
Flying the ST 18
Gunship from MicroProse (ST) 20
Universal File Selector (ST) 22
Software Report for 8bits and ST/Mega 23
Layman's Intro to Telecommunications 24
Learning Telecommunications Bit by Bit 26
Last Hacks 36

Club News and Minutes

CACE (Jackson, MI) 29
CHAOS (Lansing, MI) 30
GAG (Flint, MI) 31
GKAUG (Kalamazoo, MI) 32
GLASS (Troy, MI) 32
GRASS (Grand Rapids, MI) 33
MACE (Southfield, MI) 33
TAG (Saginaw/Tri-Cities) 34
WAUGI (Ann Arbor, MI) 34

Advertisers

Astra Systems, Inc. 5
United Computer 7
Alpha Systems 10
Graphicom Enterprises 12
Micro Cube Corporation 13
Soft House Computer Center 18
Migraph, Inc. 22
Tech Specialities 28
Computer Elite Inside Front Cover
Basic Bits 'n' Bytes Inside Back Cover
Rite Way Back Cover

Special Thanks to Steve Volker of TAG for the cover art and art on Page 35. Steve's company, **Graphicom Enterprises**, located in Saginaw, MI, will create computer graphics to fill your every need. And they do it on Atari STs! Call him at (517)793-2955 for more info. Look for more of Steve's excellent artwork in future issues of MAM.

From the Reader's Viewpoint

CACE – The So-called Club!

I am someone who is just getting into computers. I am also looking for a club to help me learn how to use my computer to its full potential. I went to either last month's or January's CACE meeting, and, counting myself, there were 15 people there. I would like to know if there is any problem with this club besides sheer laziness of the members.

Are you one of those members that doesn't like what is going on in your club? All I can say is tough. You have a say in what goes on, but you have to be at the meetings to make your point.

If you're a CACE member and have any objections, be at the next meeting and ask for me.

Tim Hotchkiss

[Editors' Note: Lethargy on the part of a club's members is one the worst things clubs and their officers have to face. Please, pitch in and help your club when it asks. Better yet, volunteer without being asked!]

My Two Cents

A few words on a few subjects: 1) Alan Alda, who played Hawkeye on the television series "M*A*S*H*" will no longer be an Atari spokesman. His five-year contract with Atari has expired; but it seems that his computer spokesman image has not. IBM, in an apparent effort to both M*A*S*H* and fatally "Pierce" the competition, has hired Alda to represent them. It's too bad that we had to lose him, but let's face it – it was inevitable. With IBM gobbling up all the former M*A*S*H* stars, it was only a matter of time before ole Hawkeye became part of the collection. Bye-bye, Hawkeye.

2) I would like to convey my personal thanks to Jimmie Boyce for making it so easy to contribute to the CACE newsletter. Before Jimmie took over, I had the impression a modem was required to submit an article. Whether this was actually true or not, I do not know, nor do I care. I can now write an article in AtariWriter, save it to disk, and give the disk to Jimmie at the monthly meetings. There's more than one way to skin a cat (although I personally prefer the Ginsu method myself).

3) It seems that I am the last member of that very small group of people in CACE who were known as "Atari ST owners." For one reason or another, CACE ST owners have been dumping their systems. Why? It has been claimed that the software is too glitchy and buggy. Is this true? Yes! Anyone who complains about ST software has a legitimate right to do so. Almost all the software I have for my ST contains bugs, ranging from very minor to down-right annoying. Although I felt it unnecessary to mention it in my Mean 18 review last month, there was one very minor glitch in the program. At the end of a game, the optional printout of your score looks like a jumbled up mess of letters and numbers. While this does not affect game play at all, it is rather annoying because I paid close to $40 for this unperfected game.

But does this justify dumping the ST? For an Atari zealot like myself, the answer is a definite *no*. I think that dumping a machine like the ST because of poor software is akin to getting rid of a sleek, powerful racing car because the only fuel that is readily available is low-grade. The ST has a lot going for it: it's faster than any other computer in its class; the Motorola 68000 microprocessor gives it incredible power; the ST uses a very friendly operating system called GEM; it's also less expensive than its competitors. In Europe, the ST is very popular. The software market for the ST will get better provided there are enough ST users around to influence it.

Tim Sharpe

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Atari News and Comment

News Anaylsis by John Nagy

Atari Corp. is reporting good sales and profits for 1987, with net operating income of 44 million dollars, up from 25 million in 1986. Computers made up 51 percent of total Atari sales, games the remainder...and the losses still carried forward from prior years are now almost cancelled. Losses from the Federated Electronics stores chain, purchased last year by Atari, are being controlled, and the chain is expected to break even in 1988. Computer sales in Europe and game sales in the US have continually improved, although the price of Atari stock has not changed much from the $6-7 mark it fell to in October.

Product announcements include demos of Atari's CD-ROM, with 540 megabytes of storage plus full audio disc compatibility. It's already available for developers, and might be available at retail outlets (at $599) in late spring. Cleverly set up to support three different "standard" formats (nobody knows which will "win"), it even has an IBM interface card included for MS-DOS users. If Atari can just get it out in a timely fashion, the market is wide open.

A long-rumored machine may be edging out of the deepest of the vapor. Atari indicated they would show a 68030 machine at the Hanover Fair in Germany, and hopes to see it to market in 1988!

Sony might scoop the workstation/mighty-mini market planned for the Atari ABAQ if the transputer is delayed. Sony has a prototype 68020 multiprocessor transputer that does indeed look like competition for the $5,000 ABAQ. But at Sony's reported $25,000 price, Atari would certainly have an advantage...if it can be bought before "Joe's Corner Transputer Store" has clones at $3,000.

Rumor is Atari may extend its warranty from the current 90 days on all equipment to a full year! Although this would seem a boon to buyers, it may worsen the almost adversarial position of dealers vs. Atari. It is an expensive proposition to be an Atari repair center, and requires a commitment to fix anyone's machine, no matter where it was purchased. Adding nine months to the warranty, plus a "company policy" to assure 48-hour repairs on Mega machines may chase more of the already scarce dealer/service centers out of the market. Let's hope Atari can better its dealer relations.

Atari's plans to build and operate a manufacturing center in the US hit a snag due to government control on foreign/imported memory chips. [*Editor's Note:* It seems that a US supplier is taking advantage of the trade restrictions and selling the DRAMs at several times cost. This has prompted Atari to file a lawsuit against Micron Technologies, Inc. Atari claims Micron is guilty of price-fixing and violated its contract to sell Atari three million DRAMs at $3.75 each. Micron apparently refused to bargain a new contract, prompting Atari's action.]

AtariFests continue to give user groups headaches, despite being potential money makers (the Detroit MAGIC show earned GLASS, GAG and MAGIC thousands of dollars to divide). However, a recurring theme in the post-mortems of AtariFests is the Hybrid Arts Blues. Alan Glick of Jackintosh Boston Users Group (J-BUG) reported that while profiting about $4,000 overall at the AtariFest, Hybrid Arts had failed to pay nearly $1,000 for its two booths, ads, etc. – despite more than four sets of invoices and many phone calls. Now, says Alan, H.A. denies it was even at the Fest! Hybrid Arts puts on a popular MIDI-Maze game and offers nice prizes at AtariFests...let's hope they get it together before they become an outsider.

On the outside at a November Florida AtariFest was BEST Electronics, a California junque/parts/oddity/Atari paraphernalia peddler that has run afoul of Data Pacific, maker of the Magic-Sac Macintosh emulator. Says David Small of Data Pacific, BEST has continually promoted its "pirated" set-up of the Magic-Sac, even down to offering printed instructions on how to build your own and avoid paying for David's work. BEST offers some wonderful and hard-to-find items, and pressure was high to keep them in the AtariFest lineup, but organizers of the SUN Atari show in Palm Beach, Florida stood fast and refused BEST booth space. David says he is gratified at the show of anti-piracy support, and BEST is now facing legal action from Data Pacific.

More clubs are investing in bigger and better newsletters and are cutting exchange lists down to conserve costs. Current Notes, out of the Washington D.C. area, outgrew the term newsletter quite a while ago...with about 80 pages a month, professional-level layout and cover art and a $3 cover price. Current Notes has notified its exchange list clubs it will discontinue trading newsletters and the clubs should subscribe. Now a number of other clubs have followed suit and dropped their entire exchange program, seemingly regardless of the size or quality of product. There are *other* options. The club I am affiliated with, CHAOS of Lansing, Michigan, is a contributor club to the Michigan Atari Magazine, and the exchange list costs them nearly $100 every month. They are moving about two-thirds of their list to an every-other or every-third month rotation in order to not have to actually drop anyone, despite many of the trades being for a two-page "corner-staple" letter. Let's hope that the

rush to save a buck doesn't crush the amazing reprint network that has kept newsletters and club members across the country supplied with up-to-date and relevant material.

A hardware item looking for software is the new 8bit XF551 disk drive from Atari. Although it "supports" true double-density and double-sided read/write, its "ADOS," which was to be shipped with the new drives, is *still* not ready. Indeed, it may never be ready since the developer, OSS Inc., merged into ICD Corp. ADOS is planned to be so very much like SpartaDOS that certainly ICD won't have anything to do with it. But then, you really can't do better than SpartaDOS, so why bother? The XF551 is currently available in some areas (mostly West Coast?) for about $220, and comes with (sniff!) DOS 2.5. Which, of course, means you can't access the best features of the drive. ADOS is said to be scheduled for a later public domain release. [*Editor's Note:* ICD has announced an upgraded version of SpartaDOS which accesses the special features of the XF551. For more info, contact ICD at 1220 Rock Street, Rockford, IL 61101, Phone: (815)968-2228, BBS: (815) 968-2229]

Mouse, anyone? The Atari 8bit line is without a mouse...but the Commodore mouse designed for the C-64 and C-128 will work fine. Although the plug won't go into the recessed joystick ports on an XE (it will on an 800 or XL), you can use extension cables and have good results. The 8bit mouse (don't get the Amiga mouse by accident!) can be found for sale far below the thirty-odd dollars retail... I bought one for $7 on a Sears clearance table. Not hugely useful, the mouse will serve as a joystick without any additional software and can make either dramatic improvement in your gaming aiming or totally confuse you, depending on the way the game handles. Unlike a "real" mouse which decodes actual position, speed, and direction, this one only reacts to direction and duration like a joystick.

Trivia: It is said that Russ Wetmore wrote the Commodore version of HomePack using Action! language on his Atari computer.

"HOT" Tip: don't probe about inside your 1040 ST (or 520 STFM) with the plug still in the wall. The heat sinks for the internal power supply are *live.* Presumably, you want to stay alive too.

Last item: B.L. Enterprises, Box 7881, Louisville, Kentucky, 40207, offers a software package that allows you to use a second Atari 8bit computer as a 48K RAMdisk. Although this sounds like the hard way to avoid an internal upgrade, it may be of interest to some users who have more computers than drives. And, as hard to find as 1050s are these days (not to mention the new XF515s)...!

Lock and Key for the ST

By R. Flashman

Reprinted from Nybbles & Bytes, 9/87

I was walking by Radio Shack today, and, succumbing to temptation, in I went. Under the alarm section, I saw they sell a round key lock like the ones used on an IBM AT. Since it is for an alarm, it has the contact on one side, all ready for an electrical wire.

Hmmm, I thought. I am always getting annoyed by people who play with my ST at a show or meeting when I am busy doing something else and can't supervise...

I bought it...and I found space right over my joystick ports (520 ST) on top of the RF shielding, and now I have an AT-style lock and key on my ST! It looks very good, was dirt cheap, and in the off position you cannot turn on the ST!

Actually, it was so simple it's disgusting. (Lock cost $9.99) I haven't tried this modification on a 1040 ST yet, so I'm not sure about the best location.

I found two locations on the 520 ST – the first being on top of the unit, to the back and left, directly above the cartridge port. Turn your 520 upside-down and you will see how much space there is. I am hoping that the 1040 has the same space.

The other, which is the one I used, is right above the second joystick port. (The one you *don't* plug the mouse into.) There is enough space, and it lies right above the RF shielding next to the power supply, so not much cable is needed.

The switch has two connectors on its end. I connected two wires to it, and then opened up the RF shielding. You will notice that the power switch has three legs coming out of it. The one you want to get is the smallest one. (This is the one closest to the back of the ST.)

I cut it right where it meets the main board. (Now that took guts!) Then I soldered one of my wires to it. I connected the other wire to one of the wires that comes up from the board to that funny round magnet to the left of the power switch (and about an inch into the board).

The wire that it gets wired to is the one closest to the mouse port. If you don't believe me, look under the board and you will see that, originally, that wire was connected to the leg that we just cut off the power switch.

You now have a switch to the power switch. Turn the key to the off position and the power switch becomes useless.

This will void your warranty, as will any memory upgrade or drive swap, but it works like a beauty.

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Vos Ist DOS?? A Refresher Course

By Leo Sell (CHAOS)

[Author's Note: Sometimes we forget to cover the basics. A reminder of this occurred at the January meeting of the 8bit SIG. The last item on the agenda was an introduction to DOS. I was surprised to see numerous people furiously scribbling notes on anything they could find. So, for all of you who are still a little uncertain, here is an updated reprint of an article printed in 1986. Let us know of other subjects you would like to see addressed.]

Please forgive the fractured German title. Every now and then, I realize how confusing a computer and terms such as DOS, etc, are to the newer users. This article is a small attempt to lift some of the confusion surrounding Atari DOS 2.0/2.5. I have tried to make it as basic as possible.

For starters, DOS stands for Disk Operating System. Atari computers and disk drives do not have a DOS or handler for the disk built-in; therefore a DOS is required to access a disk drive.

There are two ways to access DOS with your computer. Holding the Option key down while booting a disk containing DOS will disable BASIC and the DOS prompt or menu will appear. To accomplish the same thing from BASIC, be sure your program is SAVEd (since it will be erased from memory by many DOSes), and type DOS. Press Return and the DOS prompt or menu will appear. If this doesn't happen, the disk probably does not contain the DUP. SYS file necessary for some DOSes.

Which DOS is Best?

There are dozens of choices of DOSes for the Atari, but most of the best ones have quite complicated and detailed documentation, so we leave them to you...for now. By far, the most-used DOS for the Atari is the one included with the disk drive when you buy one. This is almost always Atari DOS 2.0, Atari DOS 2.5 or Atari DOS 3.0. If you are using DOS 3.0, may the Computer Gods help you! Find a way to transfer your files to DOS 2.0 or 2.5 as soon as possible, and use your 3.0 disk for target practice. Atari released DOS 3.0 after DOS 2.0, then realized that the bizzare format and total non-compatibilty of DOS 3.0 was a mistake. So, in another bold step backwards, DOS 2.5 actually came out after DOS 3.0 and is clearly superior.

What about DOS 4.0, some of you ask? Well, it actually was never released officially, but did get out and has been circulated as a public domain "item of interest." Use it as a curiosity, at your own risk. DOS 4.0 was not released because it was another step in the same wrong direction as DOS 3.0 -- incompatible with everything, and unwieldy in requiring endless disk-swaps with the master disk for even simple DOS operations.

Now, how about a brief training manual on DOS 2.0/2.5? While some DOSes may be more powerful, and others more friendly, DOS 2.0 and 2.5 are the most common and well-known. So...

Training Manual for DOS 2.0/ 2.5

Boot a disk containing DOS 2.0 or 2.5. From BASIC, type DOS and press Return. The following menu will appear on the screen:

Disk Operating System II, Version 2.X
Copyright 1984 Atari Corp.

A. DISK DIRECTORY	I. FORMAT DISK
B. RUN CARTRIDGE	J. DUPLICATE DISK
C. COPY FILE	K. BINARY SAVE
D. DELETE FILE(S)	L. BINARY LOAD
E. RENAME FILE	M. RUN AT ADDRESS
F. LOCK FILE	N. CREATE MEM.SAVE
G. UNLOCK FILE	O. DUPLICATE FILE
H. WRITE DOS FILES	P. FORMAT SINGLE

An explanation of the menu items follows:

A. Disk Directory – This option allows you to display or print a list of the files on a disk. You can see all or part of the filenames and send the directory to P: (Printer). The default is show all files (*.*) on the Screen Editor (E:). To see what I mean, type "A" (without the quotes) and press Return twice. A list of all files on the disk will scroll down the screen. If there are a large number of files you can pause and start the scrolling using Control-1.

The odd characters I have already used (*.*) are called wildcards. They are useful when you want to limit the directory search. The asterisk is used to replace any combination of characters. For instance, to show only files with a .BAS extender, type "A" and press Return once. At the prompt, type *.BAS and press Return. Only files bearing a .BAS extender will be displayed. (By the way, an extender is the character(s) following the period in a file name; you may have a maximum of 3 letters in an extender.)

For a printed listing of the directory, type A and press Return. At the prompt type "*.*,P:" and press Return. This will result in a list of all filenames on the disk printing out. Of course, you can limit the directory search in the same way previously mentioned. Use the same syntax to send a copy of the directory to any valid device.

The comma is often important as a divider. If a comma shows in a prompt, it is probably necessary in your response.

B. Run Cartridge – This option exits DOS and

returns control to the cartridge. Usually any program that was in memory before going to DOS must be reloaded.

C. Copy File – This option is used to copy files between devices. For instance, to copy a file from Drive 1 to Drive 2, type "C" and press Return. When the "From,To" prompt appears type: D1:FILENAME.EXT,D2:FILENAME.EXT and Return. Don't forget the comma and don't add any extra spaces. The filenames need not be identical, and you can also copy to devices other than a disk drive. The common use would be in printing documentation (.DOC or .TXT extenders) files without a word processor. To copy to the printer, respond to the "From,To" prompt with D1: FILENAME.EXT,P: and Return. Two last notes. Wildcards can be used with the copy option. For instance, copy all .BAS files by responding with D1:*.BAS,D2:*.BAS. Another thing to note is that this option is not suitable for copying a file from and to the same drive (unless you want a second copy under a different name). To copy a single file use option "O".

D. Delete Files – This option allows you to eliminate unwanted files from the disk. Be sure that the file is no longer of use before deleting it – this option should be considered permanent. To delete a file, type "D" and press Return. At the prompt, type the filename and press Return. In a few moments, the dirty deed is done.

E. Rename File – You can use this when you want to rename a file. Type "E" and press Return. When prompted, type the Old Name, and the New Name, separated by a comma. Wildcards are operable, but be very judicious in their use.

F. Lock File and G. Unlock File – Another name for these options is Protect and Unprotect. Locking a file protects it against accidental deletion, renaming and overwriting (but not against being formatted over). To protect all files on a disk, type "F" and press Return. At the prompt, type *.* and press Return. DOS will then lock all files. When you next look at the directory, you will see asterisks beside each of the locked files. Notice that wildcards may be used. For instance, to protect only the .BAS files, respond to the prompt with *.BAS, and press Return. These same procedures hold true for Unlock as well.

H. Write DOS Files – DOS files are necessary for a disk to boot on the computer. Insert a formatted disk in the drive, type "H" and press Return. Follow the prompts to write the files DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS. DOS will ask which drive number to write the files to. After the files are written, the disk can then be booted on its own.

I. Format Disk – Formatting a disk prepares it for use by the disk drive and computer. At this point there is a significant difference between

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SpartaDOS Construction Set Review

By Michael Ranger (WAUGI)

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I purchased a US Doubler with SpartaDOS about three months ago, and I am learning something new everyday. This is a summary to give you a better idea of what ICD's SpartaDOS can do for you on the Atari 8bit.

A Disk Operating System (DOS) is a program directing the internal operation of your computer and disk drive. When your computer is first turned on (booted), its Operating System (OS) checks to see what devices are present. If a compatible disk drive is attached and set as 'D1:" (drive number 1), the computer will try to read in a program which should take control after it loads. This program is usually the DOS and becomes a part of the computer's lower memory until the power is turned off.

A common use of DOS is to act as a storage device for other programs. Utility cartridges are good examples. Once your system is booted up, the DOS commands are executed through the cartridge menu and act as the manager for disk storage.

File management becomes important as the system size increases. Subdirectories and time/date stamping are invaluable in a well-organized filing system. SpartaDOS is the *only* DOS allowing file stamping on the 8bit and an RD command to set up a RAMdisk of 192K for XLs with 256K upgrades, which is what I use a lot to save on disk spinning.

Binary files are machine language programs in file form, which you can run. LogoMenu is a special menu program that makes binary file loading almost foolproof and provides a beautiful display (impress your friends!) as well. Loading binary files is a common use for a DOS, and LogoMenu is a good way to prevent the inexperienced user from damaging valuable files by accidentally entering the wrong command.

Handlers are programs written to handle external devices. An example is a handler written for a specific printer or a communications handler that provides a link to the modem through an RS232 I/O port. A number of handlers come with SpartaDOS.

The supplied utilities are for housekeeping. Commands like Erase or Rename will delete or rename files. Chkdsk and Rpm are utilities which give important information about the condition of your system. If you need to do something, chances are SpartaDOS has a utility for it.

You can use a Startup batch file like an AUTORUN.SYS to automatically bootup utilities or other binary or BASIC files through the BASICon/ BASICoff commands or to a previously loaded cartridge from the Car command. SpartaDOS was written so that utilities could be added later without rewriting the DOS.

Miscellaneous functions allow rerouting of normal input and output of the system (called redirection or diversion). SpartaDOS also provides a standard for transferring information from one system to another.

Add Some Color to Your Day

```
10 FOR L=0 TO 8 STEP 2:FOR C=0 TO 16:?
"SE.2,";C;",";L:SETCOLOR 2,C,L:FOR T=1 TO
300:NEXT T:NEXT C:? :NEXT L
```

DOS 2.0 and 2.5. When you use this option in DOS 2.0, the disk is formatted in Single (810-style) density and can hold 90K of information. DOS 2.5 formats in "dual density" on Atari 1050 drives only. Dual density is also referred to as density and a half. The disk will hold about 140K of information. However, a caveat... *don't use "enhanced, dual, density and a half"!!* Dual density is not compatible with all disk drives. If you use dual density, you may regret it. Use either single density or a DOS with true double density. In DOS 2.5, use option 'P" and format the disk in single density.

J. Duplicate Disk – This option can be used to duplicate a disk, but I would recommend you use one of the copy programs from your user group library. For example, Copymate is far more flexible and powerful than this option.

K. Binary Save – Option K is used primarily by machine language programmers.

L. Binary Load – This option allows you to load a machine language file. Once loaded, it will automatically run. To use this option, type "L" and press Return. When the prompt appears, enter the filename (wildcards are allowed) and press Return. Most M/L files will have an extender of .OBJ, .COM or .EXE.

M. Run at Address/N. Create Mem.Sav – Both option 'M" and 'N" are for more advanced programming uses and need not be considered for most uses.

O. Duplicate File – This is the option to use when duplicating a single file on a single disk drive. Type "O" and press Return. DOS will prompt you for the filename to be duplicated. Large files may need to be read twice, so watch the prompts carefully.

P. Format Single – This option is exclusive to DOS 2.5. It allows you to format in single density. Use option 'P" rather than 'T" when using DOS 2.5.

Take Action! with your Programming

No.2 In a Series by Gayle Sims (c) April, 1988

In my last article, I introduced you, or perhaps reintroduced you, to Action!, a cartridge-based language for your Atari 8bit systems. This month I will take you a few steps further – into various options you can set for each programming session.

Since ICD/OSS provided a manual for ACTION!, let's assume you have read through the first few chapters, and you will not be totally in the dark on a few phrases or items to which I will refer. The manual will familiarize you with the various parts of Action!, and introduce you to the feel of the system.

You will need a DOS disk, either Atari DOS 2.x+ or SpartaDOS. Insert your DOS into the drive, plug the Action! cartridge in and turn on the computer. After your machine has booted, you will find yourself in the Action! editor. Looks just like a word processor, doesn't it? You can treat it as such! It accepts almost any character available on your Atari and allows you to move freely within the screen, or window, where your text is stored. Your Control key and cursor arrow keys will be your guides throughout the system.

The first thing you will want to do at the beginning of each session is set your options. Before we select our options, we need to go to the Action! Monitor. The Monitor is the command center of the system. From there you will be able to access the Editor, the Compiler, DOS, and so on. To access the monitor, just type shift/control-M. You will see a command line with a ">" prompt. Now, to set the options you are able to change, enter an "O" and press <Return>. I will take each option one by one, and explain them to you.

Display on? The default is Y. Unless you want to see the program compile and save and write, you will want to change this to N. Turning the display off also increases the speed of compiling and disk I/O operations.

Bell off? The default for this is N. I like to turn it on, just to listen for errors and to keep myself awake late at night.

Case insensitive? This is a very important option. A few programs are written using the same variable, perhaps the upper- and lowercase A, throughout the program. The case sensitivity will compile the program, paying attention to the case differences of the variable A. If you try to compile a program and it does not compile, toggle the case sensitivity and the program will probably compile correctly. If you are writing your own programs and doubt you will run out of variables, always select N here. It will save headaches in the long run.

Trace on? Trace On set to N will compile your program without taking you through the program step by step as it compiles the routines. If you would like to watch, select Y. This can be a useful tool when debugging your source code.

List on? List On, like Display On, will turn the listing off and on, but *only* during the compiling process. Always turn this off, unless, again, you need to debug a routine. Operation speeds will be increased when off.

Window size? The screen full of text that you will see is your window. This window is the size of a normal screen, 18 lines long. You can shorten it or lengthen it to 23. This is purely a matter of choice. To scroll up, down, right and left in your window, just press the control key along with the appropriate cursor key.

Line size? This controls the maximum size of a line that you can input, and the compiler will recognize. The default is 120, and it seems to be perfect for most applications. You can change the setting to your needs. Remember, since the Atari 8bit has a 40 column output, the excess of 40 columns will be scrolled to the right. You can access the scrolled text with your cursor keys.

Left margin? Set to 0, this will allow you to type flush against the left side of the page. Default is 2, which makes for neater coding and easier viewing.

EOL character? The default for this option is $9B, or blank. This highlights the end of the lines in the code. You can choose a "*" or any other character to help you find the ends of lines more rapidly.

After the last option, you will be back to the Monitor's command line. Entering "E" and <Return> will take you back to the Editor. Entering "D" will take you out to DOS, where you can perform any DOS task as needed, such as formatting new disks or copying files in and out of your RAMdisk.

Next time, we will get more familiar with the Editor and begin writing a few simple routines!!! I will also include a complete command sheet and help page for you to use.

A note To SpartaDOS users – be sure to exit to DOS from the Monitor and key off. Otherwise, your input will be too fast and will be repeated. You might also want to include this in your .BAT file.

Ordering for ICD/OSS products is available by calling 815/968-2228 from 8AM to 5PM CST Monday through Friday. For more information, write to: ICD/OSS, 1220 Rock St, Rockford, IL 61101. I can be reached by mail at: Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005.

Until then, Gayle...!

ST Notes: Digisound ST by Alpha Systems

By LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Digisound ST $89.95
Professional $149.95
Digiplay $49.95
Alpha Systems, 1012 Skyland Drive,
Macedonia, OH 44056, phone (216)374-7469

By now, most of you have realized that I like to buy toys. Not just plain old, everyday toys, but unique and interesting computer-oriented toys. If you have been reading my column since MAM first got started, then you will believe me when I say that I buy a LOT of toys. If you haven't been reading my column (shame on you!) then just trust me (hehe).

Of course, when you buy a lot of toys, your "new product" interest tends to become jaded, and it takes more and more wow, pizazz, and oomph to impress you. What is all this leading up to, you say? Well, this month I'm going to review the neatest little product that I've ever laid hands on.

I've had more fun, spent more hours on my computer and generally gotten the wife more tee'd than ever before. What new and unique product could accomplish all this? The answer to all the above is Digisound ST, a sound digitizer by Alpha Systems.

Digisound ST plugs into your cartridge port on your ST and allows you to sample real world sounds, voices or music at 5K to 40K per second. It's offered in two versions – Digisound ST and Digisound ST Professional. I've used both models and will be reviewing both. First, I'll cover all of the goodies offered on both models, then I'll cover the specifics for Professional.

The software included is Digiplay (once again, by Alpha Systems), and this is what really makes the digitizer sing (pun fully intended)!! Digiplay is fully GEM-based and easy to use. Menus at the top of the screen include File, Effects, Bar, Edit, Rate and Options. At the bottom of the screen are tape recorder-style buttons that give you short cuts to eight of the most-used features – Record, Play Normal, Play w/Pitch, Real Echo, Scope, Delete, Cut and Paste.

Let's say that we want to start digitizing right away. For starters, we need some form of sound input. Simply connect an amplified source (radio, tape player, microphone) to the Mic In jack on the cartridge. If you're using a standard microphone you'll need a preamplifier for Digisound ST (Radio Shack has them for $12.00).

Next, we have to select the sampling rate at which we wish to digitize the sound. Going to the

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Rate menu, we find that Digiplay offers 8 sampling rates – 5K, 8K, 10K, 16K, 20K, 25K, 32K and 40K! The "sampling rate" is the number of samples per second to store for the sound. Obviously, the more samples/second, the better the digitized sound will be reproduced.

But the more samples/second, the more memory we consume. How much memory, you ask? On a 1MB machine with no accessories loaded, recording at the lowest rate of 5K gives you a max of 172 seconds of recording time. The highest rate of 40K gives you a mere 22 seconds! Using 16K gives very good reproduction and gives you 53 seconds of recording time, so we'll select 16K.

Now that we have our sound source ready, and our sample rate set, let's select the Record button at the bottom of the screen. This brings up a dialog box which displays the Max Sample Time and allows us to set the desired sample time. There are three buttons – Sample, Test and Cancel. Selecting Sample simply starts Digisound digitizing. The Test button lets you hear the actual sound as Digisound perceives it. This option is great for adjusting bass and treble controls and is really nice for locating specific sounds on a tape recorder!

Ok, now that we've got a sound captured, we select the Play Norm button and hear the sound reproduced extremely well through our monitor speaker! Both Record and Play can also be found in the Options menu, but if you select Play here you get a box with a column of buttons allowing you to test different effects on your sound. The first button (Pitch) turns your keyboard into a synthesizer! Each key plays at a different pitch. Just press keys to play a sound; it's that easy!

Using the left and right mouse buttons, we can select a portion of the sound wave (the selected section is marked with vertical bars and the top slider will be red between the bars), and, by selecting the Some option, we can play just that portion! Using the alternate key and both mouse buttons, we can also set loop points within the selected section so that the sound will repeat until a key is released.

MIDI allows us to play the sampled sound with the synthesizer keyboard (the sound still comes through the monitor). Decay only lets the sound play as long the key is pressed. Echo plays the sound wave with real-time echo. You can set the time in milliseconds between each echo, the length of die-out time and the loudness of the echo. The number of sounds that can be created with this one effect is staggering! The last effect in Play, Envelope, allows you to apply an envelope to your sound.

Browsing through the Options menu we find Scope, which shows you graphically (in real time) your current input level. This is dynamite for adjusting your input! If you're over-driving Digisound, the sound waves will have red tips! Echo lets you take a sound as it is input and apply real-time echo immediately! It plays the altered sound even as you speak.

Apply allows you to permanently alter your captured sound with any of Digisound's effects (it will also make many of the effects sound better on the finished sound). Stats displays current statistics of your sound like free memory, sound length, buffer length, sampling rate, etc. The Wave and Envelope options simply allow you to display a sound with or without an envelope.

Undo Buff enables an undo buffer that allows you to reverse many of the commands. Be wary of this command, as it can consume as much as 1/2 of your precious memory! The Draw command lets you manually redraw your sound wave or envelope depending on the mode you're in.

By going to the Effects menu, you can further decimate your sound with effects like Raise and Lower (to physically move the position of the sound wave on your screen); Amplify and Quiet (to increase or decrease the volume of the sound); Silence and Noise (to insert a section of silence or white noise); Stretch and Squeeze (to lower or raise the pitch of the sound); Fade In and Fade Out (to smoothly increase the sound to full volume or decrease it to silence), and finally, you can even Reverse a sound wave and play it backwards! All of these effects can be applied to any portion of your sound or to all of it!

Hopping over to the Edit menu we can Cut, Copy or Delete a section of sound. If the sound is cut or copied, we can then Paste it back in or Mix it with an existing sound! A Clear Buff command is included to free up buffer memory if necessary.

The Bar menu lets you find the beginning or end of a sound section and also lets you zoom in to a selected portion of the sound wave. Using the Scale function, you can keep selecting smaller sections of the wave until you can see the entire wave form that makes up a sound! The Use All option returns you to full scale.

Whew! We've stretched, echoed, amplified and mixed our sound (and who knows what else!) and now we'd like to save it. Selecting the File menu we see the familiar Open, Save, Save As and Quit options. We also see the unfamiliar Merge (to merge two sound files together) and Write (this saves a sound file to disk that is compatible with Hippo, Navarone and other sound digitizers).

If all of that isn't enough to impress you, hang on, there's more! All of the above goodies are avail-

able on both Digisound STs. The Digisound ST Professional goes one step further by offering two input jacks (one straight line in and one amplified line in) along with an Input gain control to adjust the input level, and one output jack (also with a gain control).

This output jack provides considerably better output than your ST monitor (you should hear it on my stereo!), and any of the sounds recorded with Digiplay can be played either through the monitor or the cartridge! The two input jacks can be used for real time mixing of two different inputs! It also offers Logarithmic sampling, which gives a wider dynamic range and less distortion.

Talking with George Morrison, President of Alpha Systems, I found him confident in his product and every bit as excited as I am about it! He stands behind his product and offers a 30-day money-back guarantee. (But don't buy Digisound expecting to get your money back – once you get it, you won't let go of it!) I mentioned that a Mix and Load Buff from file command would be extremely useful, and George agreed. Hopefully, we will see it in the near future.

In two hours worth of work, I prepared a professional sounding demo that will knock your socks off! This demo is 500K worth of music and voice, and demonstrates many of the features of Digiplay. If you're interested in it, have your club librarian give me a call.

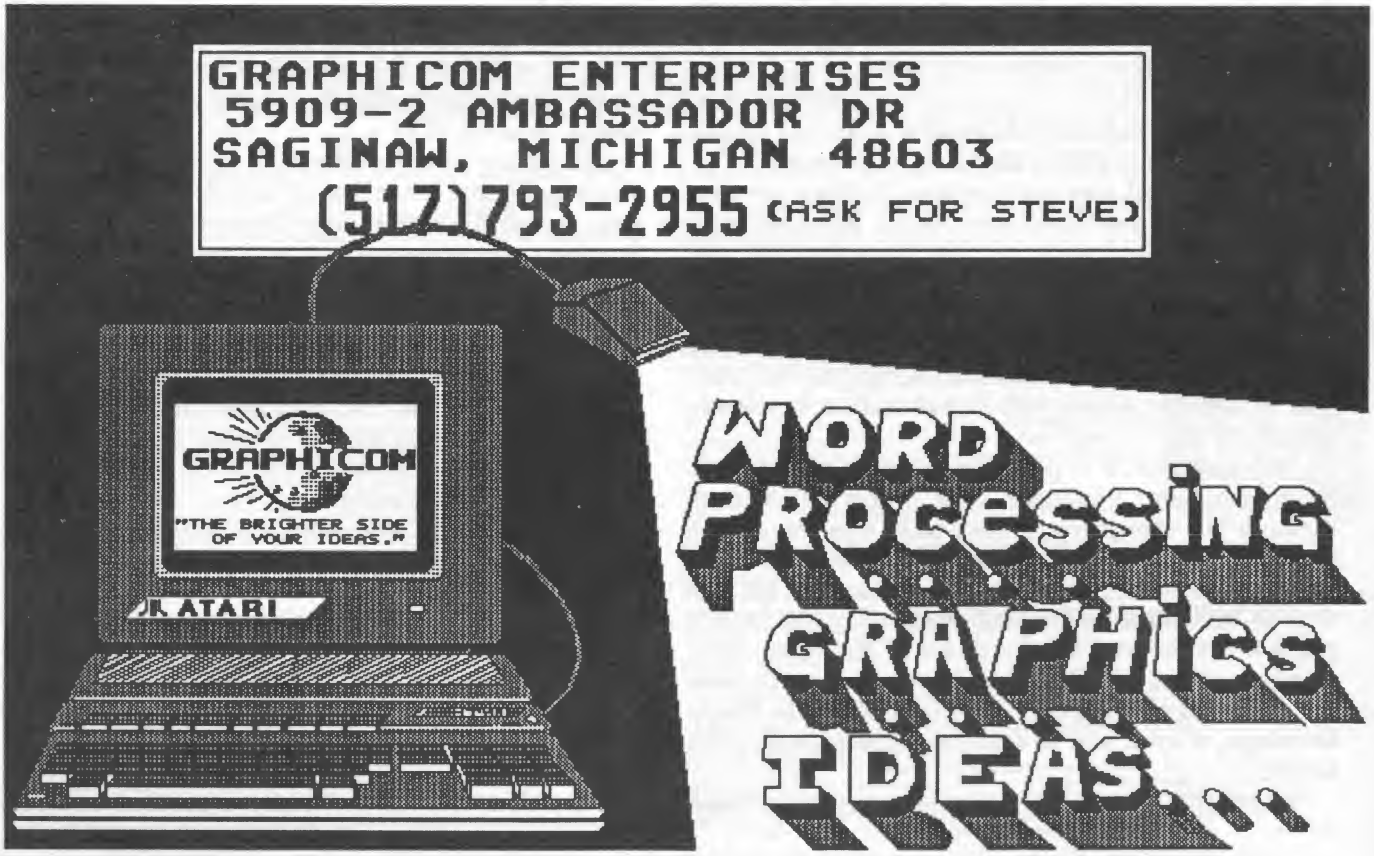
To sum up the product, the cartridge is very well put together (it even looks good) and the software is very polished and complete. All of the nice little touches are there to make it a joy to use for years to come! Another gotta have!

Ok, that's it, I've run out of gas. The features of this product speak for themselves. I've got to stop writing and start playing with Digisound. If you can't tell that I'm in love with the product, please reread the article. If you've already got a sound digitizer, Digiplay is available separately for $49.95.

My GEnie mail stop is L.Valley. Please leave me some mail with your comments and/or suggestions for future columns!

8bit tidbits – If you want smooth scrolling action in Graphics 0 (the power-up default mode) try this:

```
POKE 622,255 : GR.0
```



Gone Fish'n from Interstel

ST Software Review by Chet Kapusinski

Most of us have seen or heard of Mean 18, 8-Ball, Silent Service, Hardball, Gridiron, Flight Simulator, etc. What else can possibly be simulated? Yes, Atari fans, there is another recent arrival. It's Gone Fish'n!

Being an avid fair weather angler myself, this title caught my eye in the mail order ads about a month or so ago, but I thought to myself how exciting could it be or how can fishing be simulated on a computer? Then, after receiving Gone Fish'n for review, I was soon pleasantly surprised.

The Scenario

Twenty (20) good weeks of Bass fishing season are at hand, and as the owner of a small business, you have more independence than most. You can choose between work or your only vice (?) – bass fish'n! Don't we all wish we had such choices.

After the impressive opening graphics and title tune from the Andy Griffith show, a weekly weather forecast is displayed in calendar format with a box to click (choose) to work, or fish. On the day(s) you pick to fish, you go to the kitchen to plan your strategy – you click on the radio to get a more accurate weather forecast for the day. You can review your progress from previous weeks by clicking the Fish'n Log, read your Bass book for the tip of the week, and then you check the area map to pick the lake you want to fish.

You then can go promptly to the lake to get an early start, or you may want to visit the tackle shop to purchase necessities, i.e.. lures, maintenance equipment, (even boats, depth/fishfinders, etc.). Initially though, you're a humble (poor?) fisher and only have $200 a week to spend on fishing. Thus, your only initial option is to rent a boat at the lake.

Your boat comes equipped with an outboard motor for moving fast across the lake, and an electric motor to sneak up on the lurking lunkers. Also in your boat, you have a tackle box from which to choose (click) your lure, a lake map for checking out the structure, an anchor and a live well in which to keep your catch.

After clicking on either your outboard or electric motor and motoring to your favorite place on the lake, you lower the anchor. Then you have the option of retrieving your cast either fast or slow. And after clicking the spot where you want your cast, you reel in your lure by holding down your mouse button. At the lower right part of the screen is an underwater window allowing you to actually see the lure working. After numerous casts and when you are about to become frustrated, Bingo! A bass attacks your lure! You set the hook by moving your mouse back and clicking again. If you're lucky, you hook the fish and a battle begins! At this point, you have to retrieve you fish carefully or he'll break off. Every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday there is a tournament held on one of the area lakes. If you have saved enough cash and think you're good enough, you can enter and try for big money!

Gone Fish'n, written by Roger Damon, packaged and distributed by Interstel (formerly Cygnus), features some impressive fishing simulation details, graphics, packaging, and a well-written manual followed by a dissertation on structure fishing, tips, and other ramblings by the author. It is a worthy purchase, and it may help winters pass faster until you can go and do the real thing!

[Editor's Note: Special thanks to Interstel for the review copy of Gone Fish'n, which Interstel has also graciously donated to CHAOS. For more information on Gone Fish'n or their other fine products, contact: Interstel Corp., PO Box 57825, Webster, TX 77598, Phone (713)486-4163. Gone Fish'n can be found at many of the stores advertising with MAM or purchased from Electronic Arts, PO Box 7530, San Mateo, CA 94403, or by calling 1-800-245-4525.]

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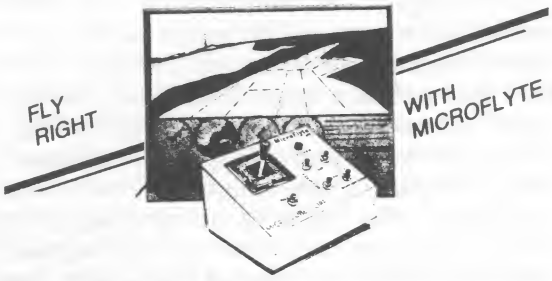

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Building a Digital Logic Probe

by Don Neff (MACE)

A friend recently stopped by with his sick dot matrix printer. "I've checked all the voltages with a voltmeter, compared them to the specifications in the manufacturer's schematic, and they look fine," he said as he handed me a sample print-out which had a white horizontal line through all the letters. "As you can see from the line through the letters, one pin in the head is not firing," he continued. I nodded in agreement to his assessment. It couldn't have occurred to a more important pin either; it was the pin which made the cross bar on the small letter "t" and capital letter "H". In fact, all of his lower case vowels were missing their top line – "punk" vowels with skinhead hair cuts. The sample print-out he had given me was almost unreadable because of this problem.

"I need some way to trace the pin control pulses through the digital circuit to see where they stop. Of course I knew it would be easy for you with this," he said as he patted my 8-trace oscilloscope.

He had the right idea; if we found where the signal stopped, we'd be at the defective component. Voltmeters respond too slowly to trace digital pulses and instead give the average voltage of a string of pulses.

An oscilloscope is a good tool for this type of computer trouble-shooting, but it isn't the only tool that can do it. A tool costing less than $20 can do just as well in this case.

We booted up my computer, hooked the printer to it and told the computer to send a continuous string of capital "H" characters to the printer. "Uh, shouldn't we turn on the 'scope so we can trace the digital signals?" he inquired. I shook my head negative and pulled a large, ridiculous-looking ink pen out of my toolkit. I hooked two wires from the pen to the printer's power supply and began poking around in the printer's digital circuits with the tip of the pen. Two lights on the pen began flashing in rhythm to the print head control signals as the head printed its way across the paper. I explained to my friend that the lights represented the digital pulses at the point in the circuit which the pen tip was touching. Since the lights were flashing, we knew the pin control pulses were getting to that point so the problem had to be further along in the circuit.

The problem turned out to be the driver transistor for that pin. The lights flashed when the pen touched the Base lead of the transistor, but not when the Collector lead was touched (the Emitter was directly connected to ground). The digital signal was not getting through the transistor from the Base to the Collector. The transistor had been burned "open," probably by a voltage spike on his power line when he was printing.

"But my voltmeter showed all the voltages to be within specs on all three legs of that transistor!" protested my friend. After carefully unsoldering and removing the defective transistor, I handed my voltmeter to him and asked him to check the voltages again.

"They're all still within specs, even with the transistor removed!" he exclaimed. I explained to him that the voltages are controlled by the biasing resistors and not the transistor. Transistors in digital circuits are either fully "on" or fully "off." Since this transistor was burned open, it was now permanently "off" and had no affect on any voltages.

That's another reason why his voltmeter was of little value for trouble-shooting this particular problem. One must use digital tools to trouble-shoot digital computer equipment. This job called for an inexpensive tool called a Digital Logic Probe; not an expensive oscilloscope.

"But, that large pen you used – it looks like a piece of junk, not a tool," he said. I tactfully reminded him that his printer was still in little pieces which were scattered all over my bench. I also mentioned that insults wouldn't improve the steadiness of my hands as I soldered it all back together. He wisely reworded his statement to something like, "...looks less than professionally built."

I gently took the pen apart to show him the inner workings. "Why, there's nothing to it but a couple of 555 timer chips! Even I could build a Digital Logic Probe if I had the schematic!" he said excitedly. I opened my circuit notebook and handed him a copy of Figure 1.

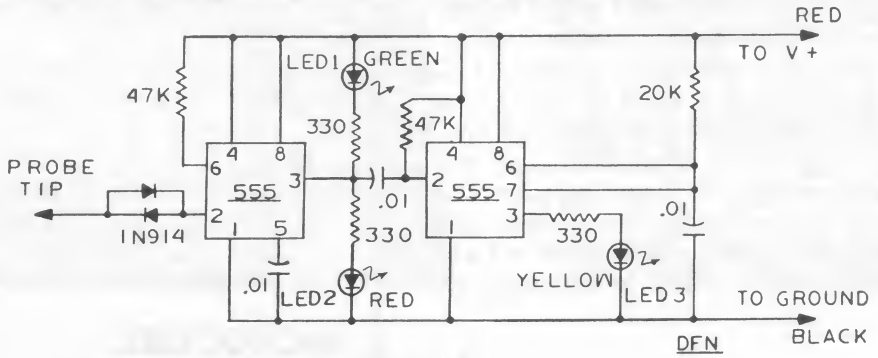

Figure 1

Building the Probe

I constructed mine from junkbox parts, but you can buy them all (except a case) from Radio Shack. The large pen which I used for the case was about 1 inch in diameter and was a promotional gift from a salesman. The square plastic case which comes with some brands of toothbrushes would make an excellent case, too.

The Logic Probe gets its power from the circuit being tested through two (24 inch) wires with small (red and black) alligator clips (RS# 270-378) on their ends. The clips are used to fasten the wires to any ground and V+ (5 to 15 volts) connection in the circuit being tested.

I made my probe tip from a 2-inch piece of welding wire with a short piece of #22 wire soldered to it. The welding wire was epoxied to the end of the pen and the small piece of attached wire was connected to the diodes (RS# 276-1122) at pin #2 of the first 555 IC (RS# 276-1723). Any heavy wire or large needle could be used to make this tip. Sharpen the end of the tip to make it easier to use in tight spaces. Install heat-shrink tubing over the full length of the probe tip and then trim it back, slightly exposing only the sharpened tip for electrical contact. This will prevent accidental shorts with the side of the probe tip while you are trying to position the tip in a crowded circuit.

If you plan to install the finished circuit in a small case, you should consider carefully attaching the components directly to the IC chip legs instead of using a circuit board. By the time you trim a circuit board down small enough to fit a tiny case there won't be enough board left to be useful.

The Circuit

The two diodes on the input leg (pin #2) of the first 555 IC eliminate false triggering from noise. The output leg (pin #3) switches high or low, inverse to the state of the input leg. When pin #3 is low, LED 1 is lit, indicating that the probe tip at pin #2 is High (a Digital "on" state). Likewise, when pin #3 is high, LED 2 is lit, indicating that the probe tip at pin #2 is Low (a Digital "off" state).

Occasionally, when a high speed string of pulses is switching the probe tip rapidly between High and Low, the LEDs will not light up brightly enough to be seen. The second 555 IC senses this and holds the third LED on long enough for you to see it.

I suggest you use a Green LED for LED 1, a Red LED for LED 2, and a Yellow one for LED 3. This will allow you to tell, at a glance, the condition of pulse string by the color which is lit. Think of the LEDs as traffic indicator lights: Green (go) means high or on; Red (stop) means low or off; Yellow indicates change is occurring.

Testing the Probe

Attach the power leads to the terminals of a 6 or 9 volt battery. Alternately touch the probe tip to the positive and negative battery terminals several times. The Red LED should light when you touch the negative terminal, and the Green LED should light when you touch the positive terminal. The Yellow LED should flash briefly after you move from the negative to the positive battery terminal.

Do-it-yourself Atari 8bit Keyboard Repair

by John Nagy

Atari's 8bit computers have one of the best service records in the computer industry. One single area comes up time and again as the weak point on our computer: the keyboard. Nearly all the original 800's (the beige tank) are still working flawlessly, but when the XL series came out, the retail price was a quarter of the introductory 800 price. Part of the saving came as a result of a much cheaper keyboard, although it still wasn't bad. Then came the XE series, priced at under a quarter of the original XL prices, and again, the keyboard was cheapened drastically.

Here are a number of solutions that have been used with great success by owners around the country. Some are gleaned by my own experience inside of too many keyboards, and others come by way of user group newsletters.

The 400/800

These machines will probably never stop working. Almost a joke among users, the 400 "membrane" keyboard is hideous to type on and was widely replaced by after-market keyboards. These are too varied in nature to try to discuss here. The keyboard on the 800 is full typewriter quality, and seldom needs attention. When it does, it is very difficult to repair due to the many moving parts inside each key. Sometimes the keys will stick... probably due to too many Cokes and peanut butter. Since the unit is very well-built and has no thin film connectors, it is safe to nearly drench this machine in "tuner cleaner" spray to get the glop out. Use no-residue cleaner at first, followed with a low-lubrication spray. I have had the nastiest-feeling keys go silky smooth after a session of this.

If you actually break a key (almost the only other common failure), you have little choice but an entire keyboard transplant. Check around, a dead 800 isn't too hard to find for parts and the replacement is straightforward...even though opening the 800 is quite an experience! Replacement 800 keyboards are generally not available new and would be prohibitively expensive.

The XL Series

Generally, a fairly stable keyboard, although there are actually at least three distinctly different key sets used throughout production and yours may not exactly match the descriptions here. Some are very nice (the one on the 1200XL is legendary) and will never need work. Others are not so lucky. These keyboards *are* incorporating printed-film conductors that can be damaged by some cleaners and rough handling, so beware.

The Atari XL keyboard and console keys are attached to the top of the case. To get at it, remove the screws from the bottom of the case (don't lose too many when turning it over!) and lift the top away. It remains tethered with a ribbon connector and sometimes a grounding wire. Leave the ribbon connected until it is neccessary to remove it. It is simply pressed into a socket on the motherboard and will deteriorate every time you pull it out.

Problem: One key repeats uncontrollably. This is the most common flaw and can be thermally dependent, happening only when cold or only after use. The repair is simple after examination of the internals of the keyboard. Pull the ribbon and get the keyboard alone on a good work-surface, keys down. Remove the metal backplate carefully, keeping those tiny phillips screws. Once the back is loose, be even more careful not to let any keysprings get lost. They will stay put without popping, one in each key, if you don't dump the whole keyboard. Maybe you'd better put the cat in another room.

You will be looking at a plastic sandwich of two conductive-trace layers and a punched plastic insulator between them. The idea is that the keyspring presses down on the top layer and squeezes the top conductor through the hole onto the lower layer, making the connection. After a few jillion keypresses, the top layer stretches and touches the lower all the time, or at least when you don't want it to.

Many times, simply pulling the layers apart, gently cleaning them, and reassembling the unit will result in complete recovery, as the sheets will be sitting in a slightly new orientation. More severe cases may require some shimming (use ordinary tape, cut into thin strips) to thicken the "swiss cheese" insulator around the problem keys.

Problem: One or a group of keys (including the "console" keys, Start, Select and Option) no longer work. This can be simply too much junk in between the layers of the plastic, and fixed by cleaning. It is more likely (especially if a group of keys are affected) either a break in the conductive traces or a bad connection at the ribbon. It's worth the effort to try to clean it first, using the procedures above.

The ribbon end is very fragile. Some older units have a thick metal trace glued onto a small plastic tab that pushes into the connector, and these almost always fall apart upon disconnection. They also are usually the original problem. To fix one, remove the tab and clean the now hanging "fingers" of the ribbon. They bend *easily!!!* so watch it.

When you have them looking good, spray out any junk in the connector, and try this trick to reinsert the ribbon: fold the ends of the conductors individually back up against the ribbon, facing the side that will best contact the connector on the motherboard. Gently press the ribbon back into the connector, trying to see that the fingers on the ribbon stay straight and don't touch each other. You can jockey them a bit with a toothpick after the ribbon is connected. Beware, you may only get to do this a couple times before you lose a conductor. If you do, you can try to bare the ribbon back a-ways, but more likely you are finished with that keyboard.

Newer keyboards have the conductor printed on the plastic. These can develop broken traces where a piece of the conductor either wears off or is flaked off, losing the connection. These may be hard to find, but careful inspection and testing with an Ohm meter for conductivity in the problem area will show where the circuit is interrupted.

The area of actual contact between the sheets can also be worn too badly to conduct. Either way, repair it with conductive paint. This can be found at Radio Shack or other electronic parts stores, or use rear window defroster repair from auto-supply houses. Using a toothpick as a brush, bridge the problem area with fresh and stirred conductive paint and allow to dry. Test it again before you reassemble, and be careful not to create new traces where there were none before!

Although more stable than the older-type ribbon, the printed ones can go bad at the end too. A small scratch can prevent the connector from making contact with a trace, or the connector may be losing it's grip. Either way, fix it by trimming a quarter-inch off the ribbon to bring virgin traces into the connector, and shim the backside (non-conductive) of the ribbon with an adhesive paper label. The new contact area coupled with the tighter fit will insure a connection.

As with the 800, if you actually break a keytop, you may have to replace the keyboard. Fortunately it is easy, following the instructions above, and used "parts" machines are plentiful. Feel free to mix parts from two bad keyboards, using the information above – you can't lose anything and can probably get one to work.

The XE Machines

The weakest keyboard yet, this one goes much further in cheap production procedures. It has no

springs to loose and no sandwich. It uses a conductive pad on each key that simply touches a pair of traces on a single sheet to make the connection. Open the case just like the XL, but the keyboard is loose once the top is off. Use any and all of the film-trace and ribbon end fixes described above for the XL to effect your key repairs. Do *not* use any cleaner of any kind on the film, a soft damp cloth is all you should wipe with. Many cleaners would wipe the traces right off!

Problem: The Start, Select, and Option (console) keys are dead or erratic. This is the biggest problem reported on the XE series, and does *not* relate to any defect described above. Each key amounts to a switch, and the type used in the XE have some internal resistance that the circuitry expects and deals with. But, due to poor planning, the amount of resistance in the console keys is too critically close to the tolerance point of the circuit watching them, resulting in failure if the resistance is a bit high. Cleaning may seem to fix this, but never for long. Don't. The fix is *not* in the keyboard itself.

Atari put several comments in service reports about how to fix this problem by replacing a resistor and adding a ship behind the film in the console key area in order to enable a more firm keypress. I have tried these methods repeatedly without reliable result. However, a fix that has never let me down is to add shunt resistors under the motherboard.

Essentially, you simply add a resistor in each console key circuit that continuously "leaks" a bit to the ground, so that not nearly as much of a connection is needed at the key itself. Obtain three 3,000 Ohm resistors, the smaller the wattage and physical size, the better. Remove the keyboard and set it aside. Remove the main circuit board from the case and remove the shields (usually bend-tabs holding the top to the bottom through slots in the circuit board).

Seen from the top (as though you were looking at the keyboard), the ribbon connector has ground as the first connection at the left end and reset at the other end. Moving in from the Reset end is Option, Select and Start, in that order from right to left. Working from under the circuit board, so as not to damage the terribly cheap connector, solder one end of all three resistors to the ground pin and the other end of each to the pin for each of the three console keys. Be careful not to use too much heat or solder as the motherboard is fragile, and the traces are delicate. Bend the resistors and tape if need be to assure no shorts when the shields go back on.

Try the repair out by using this simple BASIC program:

```
10 ? PEEK(53279):G.10
```

Type that line, then type RUN. You will see a row of sevens down the screen. Pressing any one or combination of console keys should reliably result in the value changing to any number from 0 to 6. If all is well, your console keys work with the original feather touch instead of the heavy jab you might have had to use before the fix.

Like the other series machines, if you actually break off a key, you must replace the keyboard. But, if you can't repair the plastic film inside the XE keyboard, there is a replacement sheet available that is superior to the original. Contact BEST Electronics, 2021 The Alameda Suite 290, San Jose, California 95126. You can call them at 408-243-6950 for current pricing, but it is under $30.

8bit tidbit: To have a quiet load for basic programs, type the following before using ENTER, RUN or LOAD:

```
POKE 65,0
```

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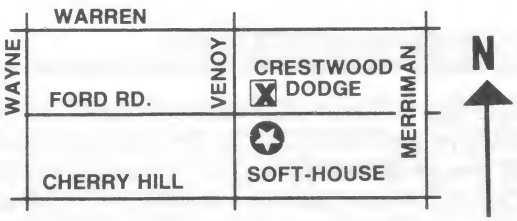

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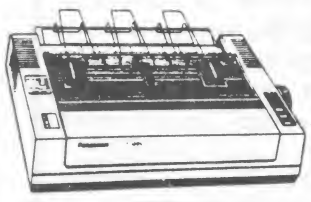

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Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the world of Atari St computers

Random thoughts to chase the winter blahs away. I hate snow and cold, it makes me long for spring, and summer of course. In this part of the world, we don't really get much of a winter, but we are occasionally reminded of the weather when a really cold day drops in for an unwelcome visit. So, I thought this might be a nice time to change the pace of the editorials, and look at some of the new entertainment ware hitting the markets about now.

As usual, these quickie reviews are intended to whet your appetite only. Don't rush out and buy a program based on the strength of these comments. If a program is really worth the gold you will have to plunk down for it, it should always pass one crucial test... yours! Look before you buy.

As is customary for gaming reviews here at the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, I assembled the expert team, stocked up on Classic Coke and plenty of Fritos, for an all-weekend go at the new stuff. My "experts," by the way, are myself (who can never get beyond the first level of anything), my friend and neighbor, who can figure out the complexities of any game he sees, and one 13 year old, who has absolutely the best eye/hand coordination I have ever seen. This kid can destroy virtually any alien, or any like thing a game can throw at him. He actually freed the maiden in Barbarian II the second day he had the game. I didn't even know there was one to be saved. Moral: Call the kid if you are in trouble, I can't help you !

Adventure Games

This is the only games area where I truly shine... I love to become the dragonslayer, and really get into adventures. The problem is that they are so time consuming, but to wile away a dreary afternoon, they can't be beaten. Some new ones that are first class are...

Dark Castle

One of the best games to come out for some time, this one combines the classic adventure with cunning and real addictiveness. Game premise is quite simple. You get to be a Nordic Prince of sorts who roams the Dark Castle in search of adventure. The game is full of surprises, and you will no doubt get to meet your maker a lot before finally winning Dark Castle. It rates high on my list of well written games.

Star Trek - The Rebel Universe

If you are one of the inveterate Trekkies out there, this game will provide many hours of entertainment. It is well written with excellent graphics and some interesting methods of calling up screen action. In this one, you can be Captain Kirk, Spock, or any other Enterprise officer. Well worth the price if you like interactive adventures.

Space Quest II: Vohaul's Revenge

This one is the sequel to Space Quest, and provides some interesting play. Not as difficult as most adventures, this one does offer a few surprises, as you become the alter-ego of " Roger Wilco," space hero.

Dungeon Master...

Ready for fun? This game is going to win my all round award for best planned, best playing game to come along for some time. Actually, we have been looking for this game for some time now. There was a demo of it floating around at least two years ago. The wait, however, was worth it.

You get to roam in the underground dungeons, fighting various nasties, while picking up items that will help you along your way. You pick a team of adventurers to help you in the game, by visiting the Hall of Champions, and making your selections from walls of pictures that you can regenerate to life. This game is truly addictive, and makes the ST proud with it's excellent use of the graphics abilities of the ST. Make a point of checking this one out.

Arcade Type Stuff...

Barbarian II

This was one of those games of skill where age is certainly not a benefit. I died a lot playing this game, only to watch my head unceremoneously kicked off the screen by that little green gremlin. My 13 year old professional scoffed at my lack of agility, and promptly showed me how it was done. 1-2-3-slash, hack, off with his head. (Smartalecky kid). This game is a sure winner.

Enduro Racer

As far as racing simulations go, this one captivated our combined attention with its very smooth screen play and joystick response. You ride a motorbike through your choice of race courses, and ride against computer opponents. Worth a look if you like simulations. We did!

Allen.....

Gunship from MicroProse: A Helicopter Simulation

ST Software Review by Bob Retelle

"That's not cool...that's *hot*!" So ends a US Army recruiting spot on TV which features the AH-64A "Apache" helicopter gunship. Now MicroProse Software has ported its "Gunship: The Attack Helicopter Simulation" to the Atari ST, as the latest in its line of extremely realistic aviation simulation games.

The Gunship Operations Manual goes far beyond simply giving loading and playing instructions for the game. This simulation is so realistic that before you can even get to the shooting part you have to read the chapter on "A Practical Guide to Flying Helicopters," followed by a two-part tutorial on "Learning to Fly a Helicopter." Then, Part II of the "Operations Manual" takes you into the "Apache Pilot's Manual," which covers "Aerodynamics and the AH-64A Apache"; "Weapons and Tactics"; and "Military Equipment on the Modern Battlefield." This last chapter is important so you can identify friends from foes in the heat of battle!

The Apache attack helicopter gunship was designed by Hughes Aircraft as a close ground support vehicle for US Army and Army Reserve units. It is especially effective against armored vehicles and anti-aircraft weapons. Gunship puts you at the controls of a simulated AH-64A helicopter, with just a few modifications for simplicity. Instead of the normal two-man crew of Pilot and Gunner, you handle both the flight systems and weapons. The Inertial Navigation System is also somewhat more advanced than the real systems now in use, to make it easier to navigate your ship to targets and back to base. Finally, the gunship in the simulation is armed with AIM-9L Sidewinder air-to-air missiles. Current US Army Apache helicopters do not carry this kind of air defense capability, but in the opinion of the designers of the game, the threat of opposing Soviet helicopters will require such a defensive response. They have armed their gunship with the Sidewinder missiles, even though these are Air Force weapons and current US Army thinking is leaning toward using an Army missile with lesser capabilities on real Apache helicopters (isn't that typical?).

Gunship comes on two disks and allows you to use two disk drives to avoid disk swapping. There is "copy protection" in the form of information contained in the Operations Manual, which must be supplied at different times during the game. One of the first screens you are presented with is a "Vehicle Identification" test. Using the information in the manual, you must identify a randomly chosen picture of an enemy or friendly vehicle. If you make an incorrect choice, you are limited to flying a

training mission. During actual missions, you will be given a password at the pre-flight briefing. The countersign for each password is given at the bottom of the pages in the manual. When you return to your base, the password will be transmitted to you by radio. If you do not supply the correct countersign, your gunship will be shot down and the mission scrubbed.

There is an elaborate keyboard overlay which fits around the ST keyboard and identifies the keys which control the different offensive and defensive systems of your helicopter. Unfortunately, this overlay tends to be a little bit "floppy," and has the sometimes fatal habit of slipping off and blocking critical keys at exactly the wrong moments. Tape on the corners can help save your missions, not to mention a simulated 7.3 million dollar helicopter!

Flying an Apache helicopter takes some practice. It's far different from hopping into a flight-simulated Cessna airplane and barnstorming over San Francisco Bay. A helicopter has two main control systems which control "up and down" hovering, and "forward and back" flight... (yes, a helicopter can fly backwards, as well as sliding sideways to the left and right). Flying a helicopter requires a constant balancing of these two control systems, as they tend to interact a great deal. I've heard this feat compared to "rubbing your tummy and patting your head at the same time."

Unfortunately, one of the few flaws in this simulation is the choice of control mechanisms by MicroProse. The joystick controls the "cyclic" motion of the rotor which produces forward thrust to move the helicopter ahead, allowing you to steer with the joystick (the mouse can also be used for this control).

However, the other important control system, the "collective," is controlled using the four keys on the outer right edge of the numeric keypad. These keys control the amount of pitch on the rotor blades, and thus the height at which the helicopter hovers. This control needs to be adjusted during flight to compensate for speed and ground effects, but it can be rather difficult to take your eyes off the screen and your hand off the joystick to find the right key to press. In battle, it could be fatal!

I would have preferred a system such as was used by Cosmi in their "Super Huey" simulation, where both the cyclic and collective controls were adjusted by the joystick, using the fire button as a sort of "shift key" to switch between control systems. At the very least, I would have liked to have seen them use the mouse to control the collective. Of course, with practice you can use the keyboard control pretty effectively. It's just a matter of getting used to finding the right key at the right time.

The Apache Gunship in this simulation is heavily armed with several different weapons systems, each with fairly specialized characteristics and intended target types. The Sidewinder missiles are used to defend against Soviet "Hind" helicopters, while the 2.75" FFAR rockets are used for unguided barrage attacks against ground troops and "soft" targets. AGM-114A "Hellfire" anti-tank missiles are laser-guided weapons with armor piercing warheads.

Using a "target designating" laser beam, the missiles are deadly accurate, but are only effective against armored vehicles and bunkers. Finally, the 30mm Chaingun cannon mounted on a turret beneath the nose of the helicopter can be used against most targets, including enemy helicopters, although its effective range is less than the laser-guided missiles. The cannon is aimed using a simulated IHADSS targeting helmet...you look at a target and it's dead.

The weapons systems use a "Target Acquisition and Designation System" to lock the various guided weapons onto a target, allowing the pilot to designate a target, then resume flying the helicopter, while the ballistic computer continues to track the enemy.

Also in the Apache's arsenal are several defensive systems, including radar and infrared jammers, and chaff and flare projectors to confuse incoming enemy missiles. After reading the background material included in the Operations Manual, I'm sure glad these machines are on *our* side!

Gunship lets you choose among several levels of difficulty in the simulation, all the way from training in the USA using dummy ammunition, to duty in Western Europe facing frontline Soviet troops. Other factors, such as weather, temperature and elevation can be adjusted to give increasing difficulty as well as the opportunity to fly regular, volunteer, or hazardous duty missions. If you survive and complete your mission, you may be promoted in rank and given service medals recognizing your bravery in combat. If you crash or get captured, well...you can always boot up the game another day!

The level of detail in this simulation is extremely high, the graphics are very good, and the sound, while a little monotonous, is at least realistic. The manual gives a facinating look at the state of the art in attack helicopter weaponry, and the actual play of the game is very involving. Gunship is highly recommended for anyone who enjoys detailed aircraft simulations and wargames.

Gunship is available from your local Atari dealer and requires a color ST system with at least 512K and one disk drive. List price is $49.95, although I paid only $38.95 locally.

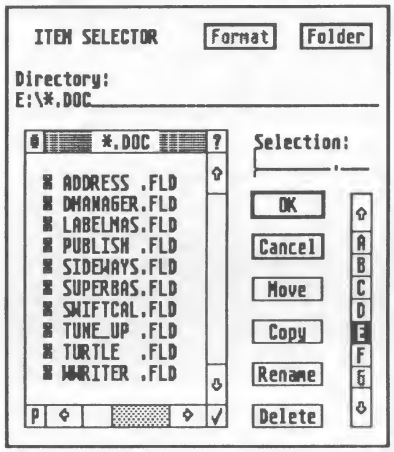
Universal File Selector for the ST

Review by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

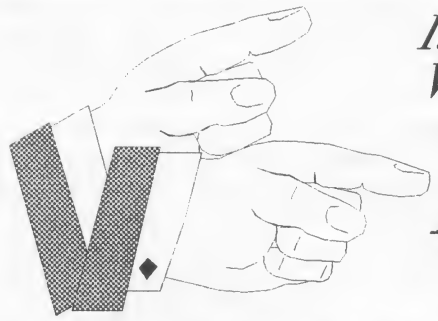
The Universal File Selector by Application and Design Software is a replacement for the GEM file selector. It adds many commands, fixes some bugs in GEM and allows much easier file operations between any drive/directory. This program is very easy to install and use and makes file handling much easier. Simply copy Universe.prg into your AUTO folder and it installs automatically on boot-up. Whenever a program calls for a file operation, the Universal file selector appears instead of GEM's file selector. It comes with a desktop accessory to give access to your files at any time. They also include a copy of STI_RAM, a RAMdisk and print spooler from ST Informer and a nine-page manual on the disk. I heartily recommend this program, and at $15.95 everyone should own a copy.

Here's a list of the features: **Copy files/ folders:** copy a file/folder to any drive or directory; **Move files/folders:** move a file/folder from one directory to another without copying it first and then deleting it from the old directory; **Rename folder:** actually creates a new folder, copies contents into it, and deletes old folder; **Delete:** delete one file or multiple files using wildcard selection; **Format:** format disks single- or double-sided, 9 or 10 sectors, 80-82 tracks; **Folder:** creates a folder to any drive from any drive; **Disk Status:** "?" finds bytes free, total bytes available and folders used; **Directory Print:** "P" prints any directory; **Lock/ Unlock:** "✓" locks files to prevent accidental erasure.

Horizontal scrolling allows checking bytes used, date and time when a file was created. When you see how great smooth scroll is you'll wonder why Atari never fixed GEM. Vertical scrolling gives smooth scroll through the directory. Wildcards allow group delete, copy, move and lock/unlock. For example, Copy ST*.DOC copies all files starting with ST and having a .DOC extension. This makes life easier, especially if you're familiar with MS-DOS.



Universal Item Selector from Applications and Design Software, 226 NW "F" Street, Grants Pass, OR 97526.



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720 S. 333rd (201), Federal Way WA 98003

Software Report for Atari 8bits and ST/Megas

Compiled by John Nagy

The hottest recent game for the ST is Dungeon Master from FTL Games. Message bases around the country are buzzing with conversation about it, and it may be one of the best ST sales tools this year. It's a role-playing game, selecting and guiding four characters through the Limbo Dungeons, searching (and fighting) for the FireStaff. It plays in real time, so you have to think fast while choosing actions and responses. The graphics are outstanding and the sound effects (digitized, of course!) are thorough, realistic, gratifying and amusing. FTL, Box 112489, San Diego CA 92111 ($39.95, color ST).

If you've noticed many of the best ST (and even 8bit) software titles have their origins overseas, you are *not* wrong. The Atari ST is the darling of the European continent, and with 80 percent of the Atari computer sales in Europe, we have to expect 80 percent of the software development is also European. For some unknown reason, much of the software is either not being imported to the US or is brought so late after original release that the pirate "distribution" proceeds the commercial availability by up to a year.

Steve Dunphey (from the Rhode Island ACE) tells me this summer will bring "Barbarian II," retitled "DeathSword" for US release. It is from Palace Software, licensed by Epyx. "Captain Blood" is a space adventure that may be the most violent and realistically gruesome game ever. It's available in France and features wonderful digitized sound effects...if you can take it.

Rampage and Star Wars versions that are 100 percent faithful to the arcade are also available overseas. Ironically, a major distributor in England is "US Gold," which is actually Activision selling products there that we would kill for here.

Steve suggests subscribing to Popular Computing Magazine, a 48-page *weekly* from England featuring about 75 percent ST material, with a scattering of Atari 8, C-64, and Amiga (the "joke" machine in England...the ST outsells it 5 to 1). It costs $65 US (remember it's a weekly!) and they take VISA...at 011-441-834-1717. Also, try 011-441-899-4233, the number for Sygnus Trading Co., a dealer that has sold Steve (far too?) much foreign software on his credit card with very satisfactory delivery. English pounds are trading roughly 1/$1.50. Be sure to tell us what you find!

New from Migraph: Easy Tools, a companion to Easy Draw (Version 2.26 or later). Tools gives you additional power to do things that were either impossible or too cumbersome with Easy Draw alone. Rotate the image around any point or perspective, do size inquiry on any line, copy images, put a smooth curve through polypoint lines...$49.95 list.

Coming from Atari: G.O. Graphics "DeskSet," expected this spring/summer, another desktop publishing system.

A public domain program hazard that has plagued the MS-DOS world for some time has spread to Atari (and Amiga). The Trojan horse programs (designed to look like a demo or game while actually doing malicious damage to your equipment, disk or hard drive) have until recently not been a concern for us Atarians. However, popularity must breed contempt, because "They're here!" Now an even more insidious type of Trojan horse is the Virus, a program that does its damage so gradually that you almost can't test for it. "Manhatten Dealer" appears to be an ST game, imported from Europe, but it has a hard drive format virus in it. Beware. And spread the word, particularly if you have a similar experience with a different program, let somebody know *quick!*

8bit Public Domain

Last month, I mentioned Daisy Dot II, a new public domain package that built on the already impressive printer program by Roy Goldman, Jr. To clear up a point of confusion, another author had released a public domain program which he also called Daisy Dot II, built on the concepts in Roy's original, but he has graciously renamed his effort "Dot Magic" to prevent confusion with Roy's own fine and even more capable followup.

To put it simply, Daisy Dot II takes control of your Epson-type printer and delivers the closest thing to laser printer definition you will ever see from a dot matrix. Even the now dirt-cheap but capable Panasonic 1080 will make documents suitable for framing. Unlike the original Daisy Dot, this one is not written in Turbo- BASIC, but rather in C, which opens its use to 800 owners and Sparta-DOS users. Additionally, it now has the capability to manipulate Graphics; change fonts at any point (even mid-word!); flush left, right, or center lines (really tricky in proportional fonts!); underline; proportional tabs even. Yike.

And there is more. A 24-page manual, designed to be printed using Daisy Dot II, is a tour-de-force of the capabilities of the program, and a marvel to look through. And, yes, it's public domain. I have over 20 fonts collected so far, and more are being made and traded on CompuServe and GEnie. It even comes with a great set of utilities to manipulate text or fonts. The only downside of Daisy Dot II is that, like the original, you must preformat your text and print it to disk, as Daisy Dot can't deal with raw text data. Some word processors can't do

A Layperson's Intro to Telecommunications

by Arlan Levitan, Condensed by M. Olin

(This article is reprinted from an article which appeared in the December, 1982 MACE Journal. Levitan's expertise in this subject is the basis for his regular contributions to Compute! Magazine. Some of the information in the original article is no longer completely accurate after five years of technical advancements and has been updated by M. Olin.)

Telecommunications; that's an awfully big word. What does it mean?

Telecommunications is a field covering a lot of ground, but for our purposes, we can consider it to be the act of sending information back and forth between computers over regular telephone lines.

Well, I don't see any real use for that...

Telecommunicating means being able to access a whole new world of information. First of all, there are free computer bulletin board systems called "BBSes" throughout the country. A BBS is an electronic bulletin board. Other people with computers can call in and leave and/or read messages. Many BBSes are devoted to specific areas of interest. For example, the MACE bulletin board and others like it, tend to be devoted to discussion about Atari computing, although the discussions can be wide-ranging at times. Many of these systems also have programs available on them for downloading and facilities for uploading.

Wait a minute! You're starting to lose me with those last two terms.

Sorry...it's all part of the jargon people who access BBSes tend to use. It's really pretty simple. The term download refers to capturing a program or information that is being sent to your computer by the BBS, and then usually saving the information on disk or simply printing it after you've logged off (left) the system. On the other hand, if you were to send a program from your computer to the BBS, we call the process uploading. You can take downloaded programs and later run them on your computer. It's a lot easier than spending hours typing stuff out of computer magazines. The free BBSes can give you a constant supply of new programs for your computer for the cost of a phone call and keep you in touch with what's new in the world of Atari and telecommunications in general.

So, are all the bulletin boards around devoted to Atari?

No, not at all. Although the number of Atari boards is growing, there are thousands of other BBSes in the country dedicated to topics ranging from religion to the space program.

I've seen ads from CompuServe, The Source, and other information services in the computer magazines. What are these services all about?

One of the disadvantages of the bulletin boards is that most systems will only handle one caller at a time. They are also usually limited as to the amount of disk storage available on them. The big information services run fairly large computer systems that can handle hundreds of users at one time. This makes it feasible for them to offer such services as on-line encyclopedias, banking by computer, shopping at home, etc. The amount of data they have is truly staggering.

That sounds great! Are those services free?

No, the information services charge an hourly rate to be hooked up to them. Some charge membership fees to get a personal identification number (PIN) that will let you access their system. That isn't as bad as it might seem. If you compare their evening hourly charges to the cost of calling a board that is in another state, the information services can actually provide a good value for the money, especially in view of all the different services they offer.

What do I need in the way of equipment?

Assuming you already have an Atari computer, you'll need a modem (pronounced MO-dum) and possibly an interface if the modem does not connect

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this (like the original AtariWriter cartridge). And that 24-page manual? It took over two hours to print, since the printer is in graphics mode, moving slowly for maximum density and clarity. Still, *get this program*...unless you are using a ProWriter or some other non-Epson standard-ish printer, you will be pleased as punch.

Roy Goldman Jr., the author, also will send you the program disk plus a complete (pre-printed!) manual for only $10. That almost beats the download charges on the major services, and saves you hours of setup and printing. But order yours soon, since young Goldman will soon be old enough to drive and may not have as much time to do his remarkable -- and very mature -- programming. Roy Goldman Jr./ Daisy Dot II, 2440 South Jasmine, Denver, CO 80222.

Another 8bit public domain jewel, "Magic," is a fairly useless, but fascinating, graphic demo. You can set a slew of different patterns rolling by hypnotically, freeze them, change them and set colors roaring through them at your whim. I used it to make a background video tape to roll at a party while the music played...and was amazed to watch guests sit and watch the thing, mouths agape. Ok, I guess it's not useless. Find it and add it to your show-off disk.

directly to your computer. Almost all modems will connect directly to the ST computers, and there are several Atari modems which will connect directly to the 8bit series, or you may need to acquire an "RS232 compatible" interface.

Just what is a modem?

A modem is a piece of equipment that converts digital data into an analog signal and vice versa. Information in your computer is stored there in numerical format. When you're telecommunicating, the computers on both ends of the phone connection have a modem attached to them. The modems can take that numerical information and modulate the numbers into an audio signal. (If you were to listen in on the phone line, you'd hear a high-pitched whistle.) That's how they send information. The modem on the other end "listens" to that signal and demodulates it back into a numerical form again that the computer can understand. That's where the name comes from...the translating device MOdulates and DEModulates...hence, MODEM.

But what's the RS232 interface for?

Some modems are made exclusively for the Atari 8bit computer and do not require an interface. Modems that are made to work with other computers will usually have connectors that are RS232 compatible, meaning all the pins are wired the same and will work on any computer that has an RS232 port. Since 8bit Atari computers do not come with the RS232 port as standard equipment, the 850 (or similar) interface is required if these modems are to be used. The interface plugs into the computer, and the modem then plugs into the interface. RS232 is actually the name of a technical paper presented at an electronics seminar many years ago. The paper talked about establishing standards for equipment like modems. It even defined a type of plug with 25 separate connections on it. The plug itself came to be called an RS232 connector.

The 850 Interface manual refers to its connections as RS232-C. What's the difference?

The "C" just stands for "compatible." Of the 25 pins in a full RS232 plug, only about three to eight of them are ever really needed for our purposes. That's why the plugs on the interface module are not true RS232 plugs. Most modem cables for the Atari are RS232 on the modem end and RS232-C on the interface end.

Tell me about "Baud" and those other terms.

Baud is the measurement of the transmission speed of a modem. Most commonly available modems operate at 300 and 1200 baud, with 2400 and 9600 baud becoming increasingly popular. This means they send information at the indicated rate of bits per second. Due to the way data is transmitted, it takes 10 bits to send each character of information. Hence, a 300 baud modem will receive and transmit data at 300/10 bits (30 characters) per second.

What about "answer" and "originate?"

When two computers are talking to each other using modems it's like two people talking over the same phone line. If both people had voices that sounded exactly the same, it would be impossible to tell what was being said while both were talking at once. The modems have to talk to each other using different voices to make sense of what's going on so one modem uses a higher pitch than the other. The modem using the higher pitch is said to be in answer mode. The lower pitch used by the other modem is the originate mode. Many years ago, the people who made modems agreed on the exact frequencies of both answer and originate voices so different brand modems would know exactly what to "listen" for.

What is half and full duplex?

Duplex describes the type of "conversation" going on between the modems on a line. Imagine two real people talking on the phone again. Both people can't talk to each other at the same time and make any sense of what is being said. When information can be going in two directions at once we call it full duplex. Imagine the same two people using two orange juice cans connected with a string instead of a phone. Only one person can talk and the other must listen until the speaker is done. Then the cans must be switched from ear to mouth at one end and vice versa at the other end before the conversation can be continued. This is an example of half duplex. Most telecommunications today are done in full duplex mode.

Have we covered everything I need to get started?

Just about. Like any other piece of computer equipment, you will need a program to control the modem/interface. Currently popular terminal programs include Express! and Amodem for the 8bit computers and Flash!, ST Talk, ST-Term, UniTerm and VanTerm for the ST computers. There are many programs available in the public domain, such as Express! and Uniterm, so make sure you check with your club disk librarian.

What does "terminal" mean?

It's just a term describing what's at the end of the whole connection. Look at it this way: your computer is at one end of what we call a communications "link." At your end, you have your computer which connects to your interface, which in turn connects to your modem. The modem connects to another modem, via the phone line, which is connected to an interface which is connected to the other computer. The computers are at the very

Learning Telecommunications Bit by Bit

by Jerry Cross

Getting Started

Well, you read last month's article and now you are convinced that you should jump into telecommunicating. So where do you start? You picked up a few magazines and began looking for a modem, only to be totally confused by the vast number of models. What's best for you?

A lot of folks have already gone through this dilemma. They usually pick up a modem and spend the next few weeks figuring out how to hook it up, another week or so figuring out the software, and more time learning how to download and upload. By this time, they have figured out how to leave the local sysop a message for help, only to learn they were doing everything wrong from the beginning!

The purpose of these articles is to try to give you an idea of what features are available so you can choose the modem and software that is right for you. The wrong decision will end up costing you a lot of money, either because you spent too much or didn't spend enough, causing you to spend even more to buy the proper equipment/software. For you experienced users, I will try not to bore you with all of this "common knowledge" stuff, and give you a few hints you may not already know. Ok, let's get started.

Is It Really like a Hayes?

The first mistake people make is believing magazine articles or salesmen who state their modem is "100% Hayes Compatible." A few years ago, experienced sysops would simply tell you "If you want a Hayes, buy a Hayes." Many of the modems that make this claim are only part right. They may support the popular "AT" commands that are supported by many software packages, but when you take a closer look they do not support *all* of them. The ones that are left out are sometimes critical to your programs and may prevent you from doing everything you want. For example, a few modems out there do not have Auto-Answer, but do use the AT command set; the price sure was nice, so you bought it. Say goodbye to your future BBS plans!

Another "Hayes compatible" model I know of claims to be "Hayes hardware" compatible, but it uses it's own internal software to do the dialing and does not support the AT commands. Another poor modem buyer bites the dust! The best advice for new modem buyers is to ask a lot of questions before you buy. Start out with your local computer clubs, and find the name of a sysop or two. Most BBS sysops are more than ready to answer your questions and have lots of experience in telecommunications. Be sure to find out if the software you plan to use supports the modem also. This is especially important with Atari 8bit users.

Over the past five years I have experimented with a lot of modems. It was like "Pavlov's dog" for me. Just say the word "modem" and I was reaching for my billfold. I currently own six modems, and each has its advantages and disadvantages. Here are a few examples:

Signalman Mark XII.

Supports AT command set and works with most of the programs I have. However, this "Hayes compatible" modem does not support the DTR (Data Terminal Ready) pin. This makes it extremely difficult to use on a BBS. (I will cover this in detail in future articles.) Also, it does not have DIP switch controls for many Hayes features. Example: The modem is preset for auto-answer. If you leave the modem turned on and a call comes in, the caller is treated with a loud squeal in the ear. Also, this modem only supports five of the standard 16 registers on the Hayes, but it does support the most often used ones.

DeskTalk II 2400.

Also supports all of the Hayes AT commands, but lacks some of the DIP switches. Again, this makes it difficult for some terminal programs to properly configure the modem. It does come with an additional phone jack so you can plug your phone into it. This modem had a bad overheating problem and required me to set it by itself so it would be properly ventilated. In the summertime, this was a bad problem.

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end of each side of the link. They *terminate* the link... Presto – terminals!

Where else might one expect to find a modem in operation?

Many people today who think they have never used a modem would be amazed if they knew how prevalent these devices are! Twenty-four-hour banking machines connect to the bank's main branch each time a transaction is made. This is how the machine "knows" not to allow you to withdraw more money than you have in your account. Grocery store cash registers and other such accounting systems regularly communicate transactions immediately to a larger computer located in another room, or even another building. Many large department stores control their heating and air conditioning equipment remotely via computer connections over the phone lines, and automobile service centers can now connect the sensing equipment that controls your engine to a computer system that will allow an engineer miles away to diagnose the problems with your carburetor or emissions system!

Supra 2400

This is my new "baby." About 1/3 the size of the other modems, it also features the complete AT command set, plus several others. Again, this does not come with DIP switches and must be configured through the software. It lacks a volume control for the speaker, but that's a minor problem. Another excellent feature, though rarely used, is a built-in synchronous clock support on the RS232 plug. I'm not sure if synchronous transmission is supported though.

Hayes 1200

What can I say; this is the modem everyone tried to copy. The main advantage is that it's a well-built modem. The additional money you spend goes for better line filtering and additional features. The Hayes series of modems were built to take a lot of use. That is why you see these modems used in many business computer systems. Hayes has set the standard in modems just like IBM did with computers.

Atari XM301/1030

The XM301 (and the earlier version 1030) are excellent modems for folks looking to experiment in telecommunications without spending the bucks. It plugs directly into your 8bit computers (sorry, won't work on the ST) and supports most of the features of other modems, i.e. AutoDial, Auto Answer (not available on the 1030), and costs under $45. But it will only support 300 baud transmission. Many BBSes are currently switching to 1200 baud use only because of the time it takes to download programs at 300 baud. I will cover this modem in detail in future articles.

MPP 1000c.

Do yourself a favor and stay away from this modem...*please!* This modem plugs into the joystick port of your computer, freeing up your I/O port for other devices like a printer interface. But now that you are using the joystick port, you will need a special device handler. This is a short program that tells the computer how to "talk" to the modem, much like the DOS.SYS file tells the computer how to communicate with your disk drive. The problem here is the MPP handler is huge, and many terminal programs do not have the room. So you are stuck using Supra's SmartTerm software (ugh!) or MPP Express. BBS programs are a nightmare. I know of only two, and both are loaded with bugs. Save your money to buy a better modem if you can.

Internal or External

This is mainly for the folks using non-Atari computers. An internal modem is simply a circuit-board that plugs into the expansion slots of your computer (like the IBM or Apple II). They use the internal power supply of the computer, and most come with their own built-in software. One advantage of such a modem is the cost. By not paying for a case, power supply and cable, you save money. You have instant access to your modem at the touch of a button, and the internal modems were designed to use all of your computers features.

But what if you want to use your modem with your Atari, or what if you upgrade to a better computer? Your internal modem can only be used on that computer. If that's the case, you will want to get an external modem. These modems are designed to work with any computer that uses the RS232 standard of connecting your modem. Whichever way you go, be sure that the software you plan to buy will work with that particular modem. Internal cards are even more difficult to shop for.

Ok, by now you got the modem you want picked out and are ready to go. Now you must enter the scary world of...making a cable!

I am convinced that the computer manufacturers of the world have conspired with cable manufacturers to make life miserable for us computer owners. Most modems have a handy-dandy, standard, RS232-DB25 pin connector on them. If you own an ST, all you need to do is buy a standard RS232 cable (male to female).

Other computers are more difficult. I had an Apple //c once. It had a DB5 plug (5 pins) on the back. There are 25 pins on a modem! The same goes with dozens of other computers. And what about the Amiga? Early versions had a male DB25 plug. When the later versions came out, the gender changed to a female plug. I wonder how much of a kick-back the cable manufacturer got for that?

Atari 8bit owners have a harder time. Not only do they need a cable (nonstandard, of course), but an interface, too. They can take the coward's way out and buy the new Atari 1200 baud modem, but that would only prove they didn't read the first half of this article. (Serves them right!) And the cost of those cables vary too. You can get a DB25 cable from anywhere between $6 to $30.

You can build your own very quickly using ribbon cable and quick connectors available from Radio Shack. But, if you have one of those weird types of computers, it's not that easy. You need to find out what pins to connect, and you must find someone who can solder.

Next month, I will give you all the information you need to build a cable, plus some tips on installing a phone line yourself (yes, you can!). So start shopping for that new modem, and I'll see you next month.

Memory Upgrades for Atari ST Computers
520ST, 1040ST and 520STfm
Up to Four Megabytes on ONE Board with NO SOLDERING!!!

Expand your St's memory to ONE Megabyte, TWO and ONE-HALF Megabytes or even FOUR Megabytes with the tech-specialities plug-in memory modules.

520ST modules use 256K DRAMs for upgrades to 1 MB and 1 Megabit DIPs for 2-1/2 and 4 MB upgrades. All boards are fully socketed and the expandable boards can be configured for either 256K or 1 Mb chips. This means that you can start by upgrading your 520 to one Megabyte and later move up to either 2.5 or even 4 Megabytes--the maximum for any ST, even the Mega! Installation is completely solder-free and comes with detailed illustrated instructions. All upgrades come with a one (1) year limited warranty.

Upgrade your 1040ST or 520STfm just as easily as a 520ST! Send us your 520STfm and we will install the second bank of memory complete for only $119.00 plus shipping. Or install one of our 1040 memory boards and upgrade your ST to 2-1/2 or even 4 Megabytes.

Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange the expensive 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessor, etc.). No soldering is required. Upgrade any ST to 2 or 4 MB with no trace cutting and no additional parts except for DRAMs. All boards are also available with an optional realtime clock, and all boards are tested for continuity. Populated boards are tested with chips installed.

520A:	Socketed, no RAM	$129
*520B:	1 B, socketed	$229
520C:	25 MB, socketed	$495
520D:	4B	$845
*520-1:	1 B, non-expandable	$169
1040A:	1 Bank sockets, no RAM	$110
1040B:	Fully socketed, no RAM	$149
1040C:	2.5 MB + 1 bank sockets	$495
1040D:	4 MB	$845
1040K:	Kit w/all parts, no RAM	$ 68
Clock Option on Memory Board		$ 30
Clock, stand-alone 520/1040		$ 38

Prices of populated mem. boards are subject to chip adjustment to meet fluctuating DRAM prices. As of today (02-18-88) $ 13.00 for 1 Mb, $2 for 256k chips. That translates to $32 for for all 256k and to $208 per bank for 1 Mb equipped upgrades!

tech-specialities Co.
1022 Hodgkins, Houston, Texas 77032
(713) 590-2068 and 590-3738

Australia
Tech-Soft, 460 Stirling Hwy, Suite 37
Claremont, Western Australia 6011
Tel.: (09) 385-1765

Canada (East)
Computer Country, Paul Wilson
148 Waterloo Street, Stratford, Ontario,
N5A 4B4 Tel.: (519) 273-1011

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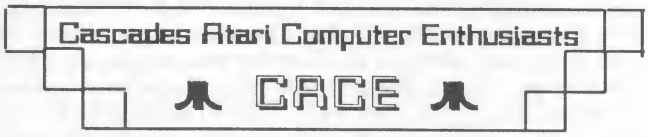
No Drives--Install your own		$385
10 MB $485	30 MB	$675
20MB $595	40 MB	$845

2. 18" x 15" x 3", single port host adapter
-room for 2 1/2height drives
-65 W power supply
-prepared for up to 2 half-height hard disks
-can be placed under monitor

No Drives--Install your own		$385
10 MB $485	30 MB	$675
20MB $595	40 MB	$845

Host Adapter Cards plug directly into the DMA port, have full 348 mA drive capability, come standard with a 6' cable, up to 20' and additional daisychained connectors optional.
1 port $ 79 full SCSI $119



Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Jim Boyce	522-4074
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1pm to approx. 4pm. The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson, MI.

Thanks Column

Ken Huhman has taken the library over and is the new publicity chairperson. Tim Hotchkiss is the new Computer Fair chairperson. Craig Schaff has agreed to help get the CACE Picnic planning started. A special note of thanks to Bob, our man with the library. He was our first librarian and did a fantastic job starting with a concept and building it into a library with many fine PD programs. We will miss you.

Meeting Minutes for March, 1988

Well, hello to all. Sorry I missed last month's minutes. We had a whopping five members at the March meeting. I hope this was due to some kind of new strain of flu going around and not indicitive of your level of interest in the club. I, for one, am tired of working for a membership that shows this level of interest in the club. If something isn't done soon, there will be no more club. Attend the next meeting, if only to show there are still interested members.

The meeting was opened with the treasury report: petty cash $173.67, savings $502.02. We are still trying to organize a Computer Fair. Tim Hotchkiss has volunteered to be the chairman for this project. He informed the group he has already talked to the folks at Westwood Mall, and they informed him that a general computer show is planned for October and they are working on fitting our Computer Fair into a good time this summer. He also is planning on talking to the Battle Creek Club about joining with them to host a fair at Lakeview Mall.

We will now be sending our articles to MAM for inclusion with the other user groups in Michigan. Anyone wishing to receive MAM should contact Jim Boyce. Jim Boyce noted he has not received any of the newsletter surveys that were included in last month's newsletter. Jim will compile the info into a single report. We need these suveys returned so we can learn what the memberships interests are and to better serve you.

Brent Fisher announced that Ken Huhman has volunteered to take over the duties of librarian. In closing, I would like thank Tim and Ken for volunteering their time and efforts and would encourage the other members to do the same. See you at the April Meeting.

May Article Deadline

Please note, because of our new affiliation with Michigan Atari Magazine, all articles must be in by the 13th of the month. This is so I can meet the MAM deadline.

Member-at-large Report

Since Scott, our hard-working treasurer, is going to be out of town for a few months, I have become your "keeper-of-the-cash" until his return. In turning the books over to me, it was discovered the club had a surplus of 16 dollars. As anyone knows from watching Scott in action at the meeting, his life can get pretty hectic, and it was agreed upon by the board that something did not get entered in the books during a disk sale. Since receipts are not given at disk sales, this type of oversight could easily happen. So, the club has 16 more dollars than originally thought. That's it from your Member-at-large for this month.

Editorial Blather

So what if there is an inch of snow on the ground! Spring is coming – at least it better! I have the worst case of cabin fever that I have ever had in my life. But life goes on and so does CACE, as a matter of fact it is going quite well for the club, I am pleased to report. We have a new chairperson for the Computer Fair and we have a volunteer for the Picnic and we have a chairperson for Publicity and we have a chairperson for the Library and *none* of these people are Board members (see the thanks column). With that kind of participation from the members, this is going to be a great year for CACE. Survey reports are coming in and when the results are analyzed, a report will be printed in the newsletter and we will proceed from there. This last meeting made me feel really good about what is happening in the club and I believe this is going to be a fun happening. With that I will say "Keep up the good work people!"

Jimmie Boyce

Fishing Around

Good day, People. How are you doing this fine Spring day? To begin, I must admit I'm a bit disappointed we didn't have a bigger turn out last month. I'll just have to see you all at this month's meeting.

The Board has decided to change the format of the meeting. We'll start the meeting by having the Treasurer open for dues collection and MAM sign-ups. While this happens, a demo will be running and the Librarian will take orders for PD software.

This will take place for approximately 30 minutes, after which we will commence with the meeting. After the drawings, we will have another demonstration, and the Librarian will fill the orders taken at the beginning of the meeting.

Now that the business is out of the way, I'd like to thank Tim Hotchkiss for taking the Computer Fair chair and also Ken Huhman for taking on the task of Librarian. One other giant Thank You to Bob Kingsbury for doing so much as Librarian.

I suppose this is about it for this month, so I'll see all of you at the meeting.

Brent Fisher

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitle members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The S.T. INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and appointed Officers of CHAOS

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	Guy Hurt	484-7675
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8bit Rep	Bill Johnson	675-7166
16bit Rep	Brian Goluska	332-4415
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
Gen. Pub Lib	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord	NEEDED!!!!!	
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

The CHAOS Download

Our 2400 baud Smarteam modem is back and performing perfectly on my revised M-5 software. Blaze along with us at incredible speeds...300/1200 are still welcome, of course!

Changes, as always, are in progress. This time, it's to allow ST users more fully-compatible operation, including elimination of sector count (what's a sector???) and ability to use Ymodem and also to be able to preselect ST or 8bit only files. Support for 80 column has been in place for awhile and will be increased throughout the ASCII menus. Atari mode 8bit users will continue to enjoy our graphic menus and cartoons.

A game of Clue! is in progress on our Sights & Sounds message base. Drop in and read along as 7 players role-play Star Trek (both old and new) characters and settings while trying to unravel a dark mystery. Joel Kilgore, Sr. and John Baker are busy as bird dogs, working on indexing the hoard of uploads we have been getting from all over the country. Be sure to read them, as well as go back through the Library message bases every week or so. Fresh uploads will have their descriptions unlocked for public view only after checking by the librarians. So, reading New only will miss these messages. Check 'em out, it will save you downloading and experimenting time.

Til next month, see ya in chat!

John Nagy, Sysop, CHAOS BBS (517)971-1108

President's Corner

April!!! It's a cold and blustery March day as I write this. Looks more like winter than spring. Hopefully, by the time you read this, spring will really be here!

We had a small turnout for the Annual Meeting that took place in March for club business. The voters adopted the changes and amendments to the bylaws. The election of officers also took place. The following officers were elected for the term that began on April 1: President, Leo Sell; Vice President, Guy Hurt; Secretary-Treasuer, Gary Ferris; 16Bit Representative, Brian Goluska; 8Bit Representative, Bill Johnson.

I would like to thank all of last year's officers for a job well done and tell the new Board that I look forward to working with you this year. A special note of thanks to John Baker, who served as Vice President. Thanks John, for your help, advice and ideas. Keep 'em coming! I also want to thank Brian Goluska for all of his hard work and effort as the ST SIG Coordinator. Brian did this job almost from the formation of the SIG. Good job Brian...Thanks!!!

Brian's election as ST Representative creates a vacancy in the appointed office of ST SIG Coordinator. We are now looking for someone to help out in this capacity. I approached Mike Fildee about the job. I think he may take it, but just in case, stop and bribe him or encourage him, as appropriate. Of course, we need help with publicity too. So come on forward and volunteer!

I will briefly outline some changes taking place. Our library rental program has been very successful. So, to share the benfit with you members, the Board of Directors has lowered the price for disks purchased from the Library. The new price is $4.00 per disk, or 6 for $20. Another manner in which we plan to share the success is to have occasional, unannouced *free disk* specials at the meetings. Purchase, demonstration, and raffle or giveaway of commercial software has also been mentioned. But, to take advantage of this, you will have to be there.

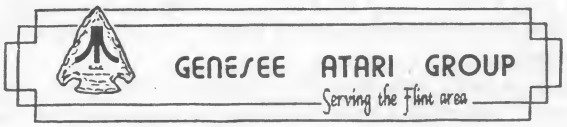
As far as the Library Rental, new prices are going into effect May 1, 1988. The new rental fees and deposits are:

8bit	$75.00 rent,	$125.00 deposit
ST	$99.00 rent,	$200.00 deposit
Both	$150.00 rent,	$300.00 deposit.

Complete rental information can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to CHAOS.

Other news...don't forget...Sunday, April 17 is the MAXIT '88 Computer Show at the Clarion. We will need help manning tables and loans of equipment. The organizers have promised both more Atari vendors and more discounting than last year's disappointing show. Hope to see you there.

Happy Atari...
Leo Sell



8bit Disk Library

WOW! I must say our new Editor means it when he sets a deadline. No wonder we receive our magazine on time! Well, as you know I missed last month. I still think our new magazine is great. Here is what is new for April.

Disk 258 -> SIGN12.CTB, main program; SIGNDOC, full docs; SIGNMKR.SGN, sample file; RUNTIME.COM, needed; AUTORUN.CTB = SIGN12.CTB. This is nicely done and documented well. It is for Epson compatible printers. Read or print docs for more info. Prints out great-looking signs much like Print Shop.

Disk 259 -> MYCOPYR/sector copier. A real nice one-pass sector copy program for 130XE compatibles.

Disk 260 -> Chameleon terminal emulator. Fully documented terminal emulator now released as a public domain program. A must have for serious telecommunication users.

The new disks for March were...

GAG-252 -> PrintShop icons, PS format, Gaetan's Canadian. GAG-253 -> PrintShop icons, PS format, multi-color. GAG-254 -> PrintShop icons, PS format, more multi-color. GAG-255 -> Surfs up! Game – nice and graphic, Docs on backside of disk. GAG-256 -> Spaceadv.Exe by Matt Howe, text adventure, Good luck; Titanic.Bas, save the ship text adventure, you're the captain; Atariadv.Bas, find the bug text adventure-inside Atari; Fader.Exe, *.PIC Files pictures – press start to change pictures, select = DOS.

That's all folks! Live long and program.

Note: there were two disk #247's. They were the new TextPro ver. 1.2 and Word Builder. I changed Word Builder to #257. Sorry about that!

ST Disk Offerings

Because the ST disks are still being developed, we are not able to publish the disks being offered at the meetings. But for the benefit of the members who can not attend the meetings, here are the recent disk additions for March.

Disk #132: A_KENO.PRG. This is a Vegas-type Keno game with many nice touches. Disk #133 and #134 contain a collection of digitized nudes in Spectrum 512 format. Disk #135 is ST GAZETTE for February, 1988. This is a news magazine on disk from a US ST user group. Disk #136 contains Mean 18 courses Vol. #4.

Disk #137, Utilities and applications. ATTIC is another implementation of the BASIC language. Diskfree checks free space on disks. Fsck is a hard disk utility that checks for bad or unmarked sectors. Fsrepack works in conjunction with Fsck to rewrite all hard disk files into contiguous sectors and bubbles the files either to the top or bottom of the drive, increasing performance of the drive. Megmatic is a do-it-all boot-up utility. Timefind calculates downloading time for files. Sheet is a GEM-based spreadsheet.

Disk #138 is Games Vol 17. BOMBER is a simple arcade-type game. Downhill is a downhill skiing game. SPC_BATL is a strategy "Star Trek" game. "TRIF" is a shoot-em-up game from Europe.

Disk #139 – ST Talk V2.0. A working demo of ST Talk Professional (some features disabled). Worth a look! Disk #140, Dungeon Master Maps. Very detailed! Disk #141 contains Dungeon Master Hints, Gossip, News, Tips, etc....

President's Report

First some bad news. Jim Tuma has resigned as Assistant Librarian of GAG. Jim was spending too much time on the library and not enough time on other important personal matters, and he felt he could not continue to do the job. Jim has been librarian for GAG for three (?) years, when Jim and myself took the job over from Gil Merciez. Thanks for all the work you did Jim!

By unanimous vote, our new librarian will be Judy Clark. It will take a few months before Judy can get in the swing of things, so be patient and understanding. I know she will do a good job. (Thanks for volunteering, Judy!)

The new 30-meg hard drive is now in place on FACTS and most of the room will go for Atari programs. I will try to keep the recent additions to our library here for those who can't attend the meetings.

One last note, I made a huge mistake with our catalogs. If you will notice, there is no way to identify the 8bit disks from the ST disks because they both use the same numbering system. So, if you order by mail, you must specify which system you are ordering for. One of our members in Minnesota ordered a bunch of disks, and naturally I sent the wrong ones out. Sorry about that! We are currently looking at ways to correct this, but it will take some time. So be sure to order properly.

Also, don't forget that this club is your club. If you are not happy with the way things are run, let one of the officers know. If we don't get any comments, then I must assume we are doing everything Ok. What did you folks think of that letter in last month's MAM? Do you feel that way about our club too? Let us know!!!

The Genesee Atari Group is a nonprofit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc.

GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. During the school year, we also have a 4th Saturday session for second-shift workers. All are welcome. GAG is a participating member of the Michigan Atari Magazine. Membership in GAG includes a subscription to MAM and access to our large library of PD software, hardware and magazines. Membership is $15 a year.

Next meetings:	April 13	General Meeting
	April 23	Saturday Workshop
	May 11	General Meeting

(May workshop may be cancelled due to Memorial Day. We will publish the date next month.)

For information contact:

Jerry Cross 313-736-4544
FACTS BBS 736-3920
Genesee Atari Group
PO Box E
Flint, MI 48507

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus. Dues are $20/yr.

President:	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President:	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer:	Dave Bryant	
Librarian:	Steven Buechler	
Archiver:	Dave Oldenburg	
ST Chairman:	Jim Zinke	
SysOp:	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616)657-2665	

April, 1988 Treasurer's Report

It's in the mail!! We finally got the survey going to the Atari ST users known to be in the club. There were 30 names on a list donated by Rich Fosmoe (Thanks Rich), and at next month's meeting we will have the results. We will be trying hard to promote ST membership growth, and from the few surveys I got back (within a week) several are in the "maybe" stage. One drawback seems to be that there is never an ST computer at the meetings. It's hard to discuss a problem or show a demo without one. It's members who provide the hardware for the meetings, so maybe one of the ST members could bring a computer? I would be glad to hear from you. We also have DEGAS and the Winter issue (1987) of STart magazine in the club library.

The Pine Lake BBS is alive and well, and may be reached at (616)664-5769. There are Sigs for both Atari ST and 8bit, along with IBM, Amiga, Macintosh and general discussion. I have uploaded the adventure map that was demoed at the March meeting. It works with Antic's Adventure Creation Kit (March 1988).

Please check the expiration date on your mailing label. It will remind you when to renew your membership. Make any inquiry to our mailing address: GKAUG, 3218 Lincolnshire Blvd., Kalamazoo, MI 49001.

Still Computing.
David Bryant/Treasurer

GKAUG Minutes

Third meeting of the year and this meeting went off rather well with about 15 members attending along with two new members which we welcome to our group, Harold Reiland of South Haven, and Ray Wilson of Kalamazoo.

The weather was great for Saturday's meeting, and we discussed the use of the Cute Label Program. It works really well with an Epson-style printer but we are still at a loss on how to use it on other printers.

Alex Stevens went over the MERIT Network for a number of our users who had some questions on how to use it. Dave Oldenburg had four disks available for your examination and purchase. Dave Bryant provided the computer this month and enrolled two additional members. It looks as if the club will be solvent for another month. He also introduced us to Antic's Adventure Creator from the March '88 issue. It looks as if we will be working on a group map for submission in Antic's contest. I'm going to start this week on my map. The printouts for this map are for Epson compatibles also. I may just have to buy an Epson printer if this keeps up. My favorite programs can't print on my Prowriter... bummer!

I got a call from Detroit on Alpha's "Graphics Transformer." It might be nice if MAM included the company's address with these reviews. It would make them easier for someone to order.

We are still waiting to get our two extra double density drives for the BBS. It shouldn't be too long anyway. All we need is the power supply and the cabinet for them. They are both in working condition now.

Next month: 1. Bring in you favorite game...or not so favorite game. We want to see it. We will be looking for games for our summer picnic (in July). 2. We will be looking at some of Antic's "Adventure Creator" maps. If you want some help...let us know.

No meetings are scheduled for July and August... except for the picnic. The date will be decided later. This will give us an opportunity to "see the sun." Computing is basically an indoor sport.

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS' — MICHIGAN'S Oldest 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

General Meeting: First Thursday (every month) 6 p.m. until 9:00. Planning Meeting: Second Thursday, 7 p.m. until 9:00. Meeting At: Athens High School, Troy, MI, Room 1406, 4333 John R, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile). Mailing Address: Great Lakes Atari ST Support, P.O. Box 99737, Troy, MI 48099. Phone: (313) 828-1653, after 3:30 p.m.

From the Desk of the President

April...a time to grow.... Do we see the signs of discord in the Atari community? Are we unhappy because the company that manufactures our machine does not display the tenacity to produce, market and support its product like other computer companies? *Are we Atari bashers?* Perhaps we should now direct ourselves to utilizing our hardware and software and give the company time to grow and change... It does take time, you know. So onwards to spring....

Our May meeting will feature telecommunications from soup to nuts. We will have demos on FLASH! and ST-Talk Pro. The seminar will feature two ST systems, one with a BBS and the other with a home package. Our guest speaker will be Mike Gillie, sysop of the Cosmic STomper (300/1200 baud, 24 hrs., phone 313-547-0440 in Royal Oak, MI.), using the MichTron BBS system. Now is a good time for you non-modem users to see how easy and convenient it is to communicate with other computers over the phone and see how a modem can be a valuable asset to your system. We even have BBS and telecommunications software in our public domain library.

The survey result was very informative and we no longer have to guess what you want to see at the meetings...everything! So...we will cover just that. The year will be full and a missed meeting will be a big loss. Besides, we will miss you!

There will be stronger emphasis on new-user training. At every meeting, there will be a new user's corner. New users will have a machine dedicated from 6 p.m.

until 6:30 (when I start flapping my gums), and continue from 7:15 until 8, covering Desktop operations, tips & tricks, RAMdisks, print spoolers, auto folders, handy accessories and more. So come early, take part, learn, enjoy and share your experiences. We hope to help you understand your ST and make it work (and play) better.

Note to Atari Corporation: We trust you to address your problems with production, advertisement, dealer network and user-group support in a professional manner...we support you.

Steve Mileski, President

Meeting: May 4, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael SW., 6:30 p.m.

George Nosky	President/Treasurer	(616)942-1527
2240 Parkridge Dr. SE. Grand Rapids, 49506.		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616)957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Member. Chairman	(616)784-6230

President's Comments

GRASS welcomes two more new members. John Dunn from East Grand Rapids and Lonnie Zamarripa from Wyoming joined us in March. John brought his daughter, Dorothy, and grandson. We have gained four new members in the last two months.

Steve Gilbert wrote a fantastic "bowling statistics" program which he demonstrated at the March meeting. I doubt there are any statistics that a bowling secretary would require that Steve hasn't incorporated. I understand it has been used by one league for several weeks without any glitches. Great job, Steve. Our thanks go to Con Scooros for providing a projection TV for Steve's demo. The library's TV didn't work, so Con got one from his work while we started the meeting. Thanks!

The revised by-laws were discussed and approved. Copies will be available at the meetings. Tim Feenatra volunteered to keep our members' "hardware" listing up-to-date. He will have a sheet at each meeting, so you can indicate to him what you have bought or sold since the questionnaire. Tim will then upload this information to Steve Gilbert's BBS.

Speaking of BBSes, another of our members started his own board. Mark Haaksma calls his "Knights of the RoundTable," and his number is (616)457-8738. It's good to see our young people getting so involved with Atari systems. I might add, two other members have BBSes. Steve is the SysOp of "GRABBS." His number is (616) 891-8740. Al Taylor has "ETXE." You can reach his BBS at (616)245-1859.

Many volunteered to help Gerry Borysiak with the Atari Fair. As you know by now, it was moved to May. I won't say much here since the Fair could be history by the time you read this. (I'm writing this the first week of March, and you probably won't read it until mid-May.)

I'll pass on an item to those of you who missed the March meeting. The February 22nd issue of Manufacturing Week indicated that Atari Corp, was expected to announce that it was pulling manufacturing back to the United States from the Pacific Rim. According to Manufacturing Week, and I quote, "according to Company sources, Atari decided to make the move to gain controle of it's production, keep costs in line and insure a consistent product. Atari is expected to have OMNI-Shore Inc., a contract manufacturer of consumer electronics based in Carson City, Nevada, produce the inexpensive consumer electronic products for Atari."

Manufacturing Week continued by saying, "Atari insiders said that because manufacturing will be situated close to its design center her, it's ST, 2600 VCS and 7800 Pro System products should improve in quality."

Keep watching the newspaper and watching and listening to your TV and radio. Gary Heitz is getting us some free publicity for our meetings. This should help us get more new members. Boris Palmer, from Electronic Boutique, stopped in to see us in March. Electronic Boutique is located in the Woodland Mall near Hudson's. To my knowledge, they are the only ones in the area who stock Atari 8bit software.

Steve Gilbert, starting with the March issue, is putting this epistle on his BBS. This is a big help in getting information to you on a timely basis. Gary has lined up Tim to demo "war games" at the May meeting. For those of you reading this on "GRABBS," don't forget the News Station demo by Chuck at the April 6th meeting. News Station will be raffled off to some lucky soul. Tickets are $1 or three for $2.

We will vote at the May meeting to determine if we will meet during the summer months. One member suggested we meet informally in small groups during the summer. Think about it!

Unfortunatly, a number of our "comments" were left out of the March issue of MAM. I hope our meeting place, time, etc. makes it this month. Also, the expiration notice didn't make it. Those people who haven't paid their 1988 dues are now considered inactive and are not receiving this issue of MAM. One other lost item; I would like to exchange newsletters with any user groups who are reading this and are not part of MAM. My address is at the beginning of this column.

Hope to see you May 4th.

M.A.C.E. Journal

MACE Meeting Dates

Officer	General
April 8	April 19
May 6	May 17
June 10	June 21
July 8	July 19
Aug. 5	Aug. 16
Sept. 9	Sept. 20
Oct. 7	Oct. 18
Nov. 4	Nov. 15
Dec. 9	Dec. 20

General meetings are held in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10-1/2 mile Rd and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30. MACE membership is $20/yr. or $35 for 2 yrs. To contact MACE, write PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037.

Due to the fact that the March General Membership Meeting of MACE will be held after MAM's submission deadline, the March meeting minutes will not appear in the April issue. Watch for them in the May issue...

Michael Olin MACE Rec.Sec'y.

MACE Logo Contest

MACE needs a logo to go above the club news. Rules are: Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts must be written within the logo or used with the initials and written out after the logo. No signature on drawing, MACE Membership number must be on back of drawing. Numbers will be checked. Size should be no smaller than 3x5 and no larger than 8x10.

Materials: solid white paper done with black ink. Art work can be done using graphics (that you make yourself) on the computer or freehand artwork. Remember, this must look nice when reduced.

You must be a MACE member and officers may not enter. Deadline is May 31, 1988. Submit your work at a MACE meeting or mail to MACE, PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI, 48037. The prize is a $50.00 value!

Winner will be announced at the June meeting. The winner gives all rights of his/her logo to MACE. Judging will be done by the MACE officers. If you have questions, see Heather P. Neff.

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: March 12, April 16, 1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Steve Volker	ST Disk Lib.	793-2955

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bit and the ST and access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 140 disks in the 8bit library and 40 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks *at no charge* if you bring your own disk to copy on at the meeting. If you don't have a disk, you can get 8bit disks for $1.00 and ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now!

The President Speaks Out

As you may have noticed, George Stuart's name is no longer in the list of officers. He is moving and has officially resigned his post, and I'll miss all the time and effort that he saved me! Good luck George!

OK, to the meat of the matter. Our eight-bitters seem to be dying out. When I ask for ideas for demos, I get no response. When I ask for volunteers for demos, I have to twist arms. This is your club! You've got to put something in to get something out! Al Jennings, 8bit librarian (doing an excellent job!) and chief 8bit demonstrator, has just succumbed to temptation and now has an ST. Please tell me what we can do to get you back! You are a very big part of the club! Show up at the next meeting and air your feelings. Well, since I don't want to wind up this message with doom and gloom, I will mention that our ST ranks continue to swell. Many of the things I said above apply to all of you ST'ers as well. I need your input too! See you all at the next meeting.

Hot Flashes from the Future!

The month of April brings in new goodies to demo for the ST. For all those trekkie fans, Al Jennings will demo Star Trek, an adventure game with excellent graphics and digitized sound. On the useful side (teehee), LeRoy Valley will demo LabelMaster Elite, which allows you to print labels with PrintMaster graphics and different styles of text. LabelMaster Elite also serves as a name and address database!

The eight-bitters will be treated to a demo of a new DOS called Super DOS 4.4. I've seen a lot of DOSes, and this is the best yet! We received a copy from Technical Support and will raffle the disk to members. They will also be treated to some of the best PD software in the library. Come on guys and gals, you can't miss this one!

Relics to Relish

On the 8bit side of the room, Bob demoed Project Planner, which helps you organize a project from start to finish and does it very easily!

After Bob finished up, George demoed the XEP-80, the 80 column card from Atari, on a monochrome screen and it looked great! Using supplied software, you can change the display (blinking cursor, block cursor, light text on dark background, etc.). AtariWriter Plus fully supports the XEP-80 (or is it the other way around?) and works extremely well!

On the ST side of the room, LeRoy demoed Digisound ST – Oh, what a demo! (Of course, I'm slightly biased.) Along with Digisound ST, there was a product giving the ST simulated stereo! The "Audio Enhancement System" from Megatronics (1-800-232-6342) includes a monitor cable which gives you an audio-out for any ST. This audio-out then connects to a stereo synthesizer (with two bookshelf speakers) and sounds great! All for $69.95!

8bit Equipment Volunteers:

Bob Schindehette	Disk Drive & Monitor
Club	800XL

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Dan Mazurowski	520ST & disk drive
LeRoy Valley	Monitor

Once again, a big thanks to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. Please, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, call!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor or drive for the system!

WAUG! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7 to 10 pm. Meetings are held in Room 2228 of the University of Michigan School of Education, located on the corner of South and East University in Ann Arbor.

List of Future WAUG! Activities

Apr. 12:	Music
May 10:	"Hack and Slash"
Jun. 14:	Elections/Flea Market

General Meeting 3/8/88

This was the business applications meeting, so the emphasis of demos was on spreadsheets and databases. First, Bob Carlini showed us how the membership database is kept up-to-date using Data Perfect. This was followed by Swiftcalc for the ST, a very slow spreadsheet but easy to use. Thanks to Bob's video camera knack and Doug Feldman's VCR, these demos were shown even though Bob couldn't make it to the meeting. This was good because we couldn't get the 8bit computer to work properly, and Doug couldn't demo software as planned. However, glowing accounts of the 8bit programs were given!

I attempted to demo programs from the disk bundle I put together. Despite not being prepared to do this, I *easily* managed to figure out the address book program. (Why are you laughing? Oh, you were at the meeting.)

Mike Olin demoed a program written in GFA BASIC by Mike Mitchell and Bob Carlini to extract names from Super Directory files. It will be used to create a nice catalog.

Congratulations go to Dick Selke, who won the 8bit BASIC Turbo Charger package donated by Alpha Systems (see last month's MAM for details and software review).

There was discussion concerning the club's treasury. The President proposed meeting 12 months (rather than the current 10), which would mean additional costs for MAM and room rental. These additional costs would be handled by raising dues to $15/year. This will be voted on at the April meeting (along with discussion on the feature topic of MIDI and music).

From The Prez...

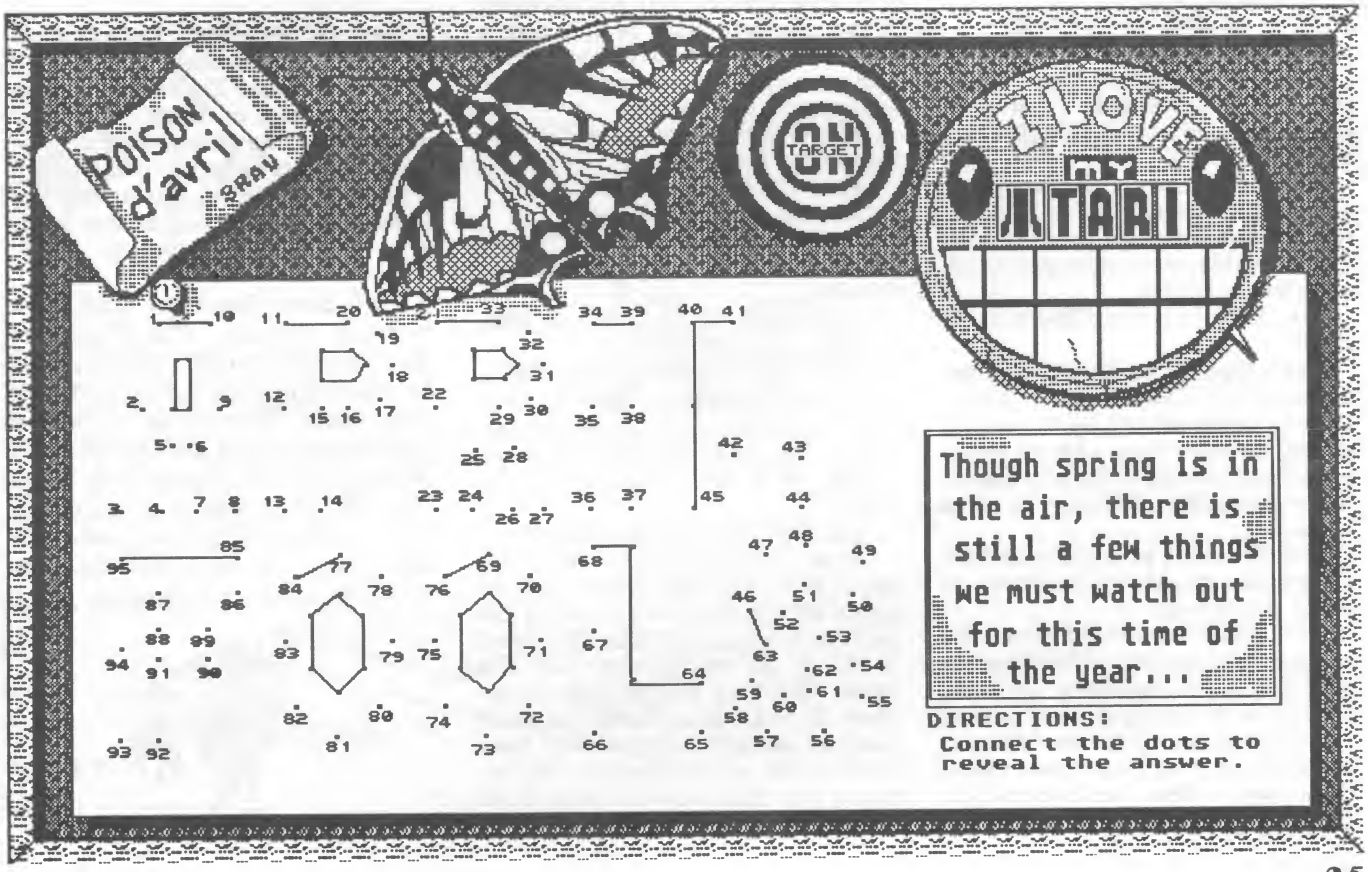
The April meeting promises to be full! The feature topic will be Music, one nice fringe benefit of owning Atari equipment.

We will make a formal decision about increasing member dues and meeting in July or August. As discussed in the February meeting, options are: 1) Membership would cost $15. People with renewal dates during or after July would have to make arrangements for MAM. 2) Memberships cost $15. People with renewal dates during or after July would have two months subtracted from their renewal dates. 3) No meetings held in July and August.

Several members have not received MAM until after the monthly meeting while the majority of members are receiving their copies long before the meeting. I would like members to consider what is most important: having the magazine delivered directly or picking them up at the meetings? There is a disadvantage to not mailing issues, and that is the fact WAUG! would be forced to send the magazine to members not attending the meeting. We will discuss this in April, so please bring your thoughts and suggestions.

Lastly, it is time to think about elections of officers for the 88-89 year. There are many qualified people who would make great officers; I hope to see a show of volunteers to keep our club growing. So here's the bottom line: run for an office of your choice, there are 6 to chose from with their own challenges and rewards!

Michael Olin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Cable-B-Gone by Sledgehammer Hardware and Software

Reviewed by Kenworthy Snorkel (Better Atari Regional Federation)

Have you ever wished you could do away with all those cables running around behind your computer? I found a product claiming to do just that. It's called Cable-B-Gone (CBG) by Sledgehammer Hardware and Software. Instead of buying an RS232 cable with your new modem, why not buy their RS232 Cable-B-Gone.

By the way, CBG's are available in just about every plug end imaginable – modem, printer, joystick, whatever. They have it. It's a 2-unit set. Simply plug one unit into the computer and the other into the modem. No more cable! The units communicate over the air.

The CBG units are small, no larger than the plug they replace. I was so amazed with the claims of CBG, I went to Sledgehammer Hardware and Software to find out more. I was lucky enough to get a few minutes to chat with the President of Sledgehammer H&S.

Me: Hello, I'm glad you could take the time to answer a few questions about your Cable-B-Gone hardware.

Prez: I'm more than happy to answer questions. We're very excited about this new product line. Quite frankly, we're also glad to receive free publicity.

Me: How can the CBG's be so small?

Prez: Thanks to the FCC allowing unheard of amounts of interference to be broadcast by household items, we have been able to eliminate space-eating items like shielding and quality. It's easy to make 'em small.

Me: Wouldn't an unshielded RF source interfere with monitors or affect disk drives?

Prez: That's an added plus. The intense RF noise causes continuous color-shifting in monitors. No more worries over images getting burned into expensive monitors. Also, it makes it easy to bulk-erase disks. Just place a drive (or disk) within 17 yards of one of our transceivers and whoosh...a clean, virgin disk.

Me: Does that mean I would have to position my drives more than 17 yards from the rest of my computer equipment?

Prez: Yes, but remember there's no cables to worry about, so the 17-yard minimum is the only restriction when deciding where to place your drives. Also, it's well documented that computer users don't get enough exercise. Just 20 minutes a day of computer use will force the typical user to walk more than 2 miles.

Me: Doesn't interference cause garbled or lost data?

Prez: We did have problems at first. We solved it by using a highly sophisticated transmission protocol which sends data in packets, then checks and rechecks for accuracy. It's similar to Xmodem used by the on-line services.

Me: Doesn't that slow down the system?

Prez: Yes, but that's the best time to make the 17-yard walk to change disks. We were able to increase speed by making all the units operate on the same frequency. There are some tremendous advantages. When the computer is printing a document, the disk drive transceiver will pick up the signal and copy the computer output to disk.

Me: What if I don't want a disk copy of the output?

Prez: Unplug the drive.

Me: But it's 17 yards away.

Prez: You must have 17 yards of AC power cord. Just unplug it from the wall.

Me: Back to their small size. How are the units powered?

Prez: Another first. Our CBG's are nuclear powered. Each has it's own tiny reactor. No batteries to replace. No power drain on the computer. And, best of all, no power cord.

Me: Isn't radiation a problem?

Prez: At first we were concerned about that, but after lab testing we found each unit emits only 1% of the radiation released in the Chernobyl disaster. So we figure, what the heck. What's a few random mutations 30 or 40 years down the road? Also, we haven't heard a word from our beta or gamma testers. We assume the units are working flawlessly.

Me: What's the life span of one of these reactors?

Prez: We aren't sure yet. We do guarantee them for life. The life of the user, not his computer equipment. Like I said before, we haven't heard a word from our beta or gamma testers.

Me: Are the reactors safe?

Prez: Yes, completely safe. We have had some sporadic problems with some of the units during assembly. All the problems were attributed to sloppy workmanship.

Me: What problems have you run into, and what do you do about employee error?

Prez: At one point in production, the reactors are very unstable. One slip can cause a tremendous explosion. All employees involved in production errors are no longer with us. We usually shut down the entire plant when a unit fails.

Me: How often do these explosions occur?

Prez: We haven't had a plant "mushroom-cloud" on us for days.

At this point a secretary walks in.

Sec: Mr. Prez, Mr. Kadafy is on the phone long distance for you.

Prez: (To Sec.) Thank you. I'll be with him in a minute. (To Me) I really must be going. Our plutonium supplier is on the phone. He's a bit unpredictable, but he has the lowest prices and the quickest delivery. Thanks for stopping by.

I left Sledgehammer H&S with a warm feeling. The Prez was the most friendly, warm, and trustworthy person I've met in a long time. He seems to have a very unique and safe product. I admire the quality control. Who else closes a plant if only one unit fails? If there's enough interest, I'll do a review of a CBG for future publication.

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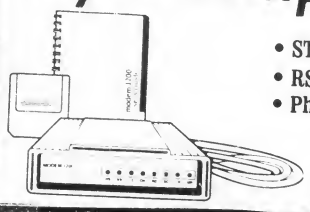

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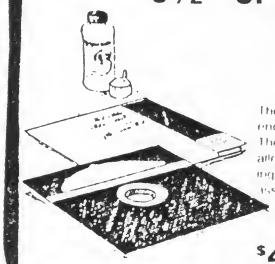

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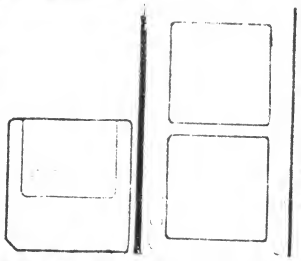

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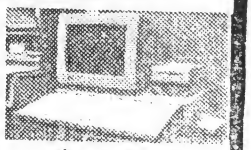

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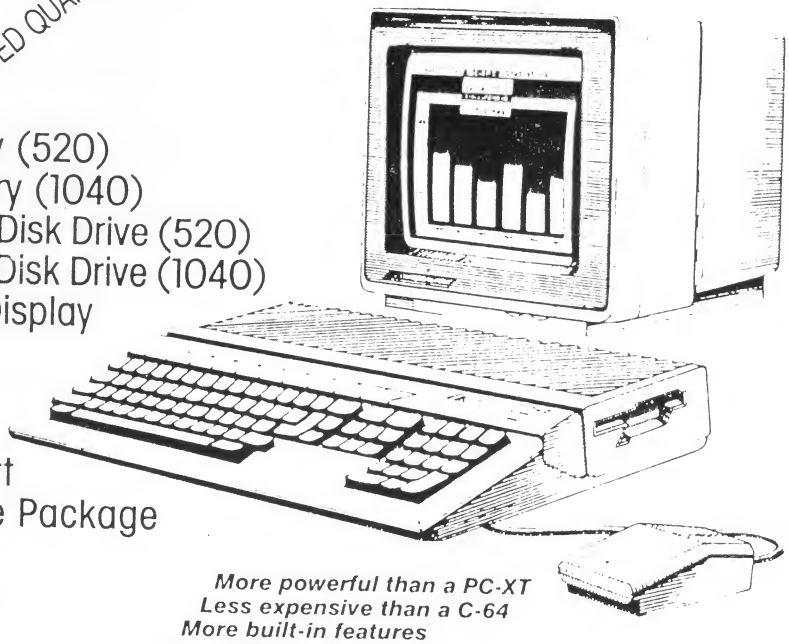

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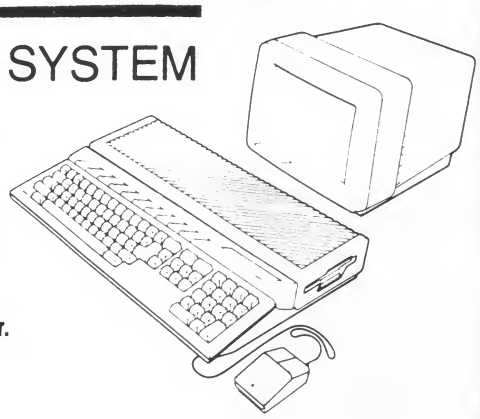

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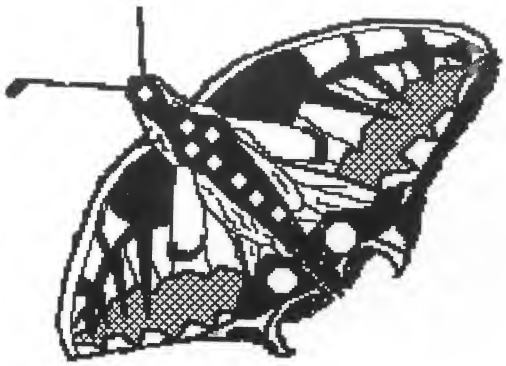

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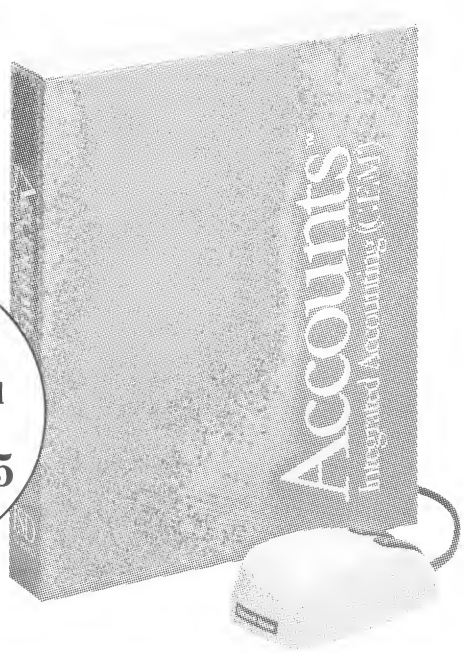

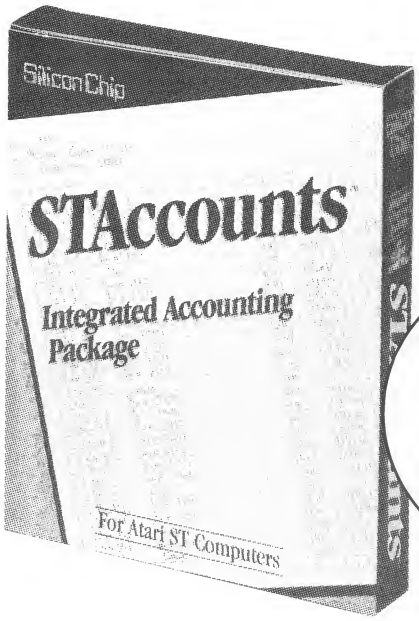

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MAM this Month

Vol. 3 No. 5
May 1988

Features

From the Reader's Viewpoint	2
Atari News and Comment	3
Give a Turbo Boost to Your ST (ST Software)	4
Building an ST Trackball (ST Hardware)	6
Take Action! with Your Programming (8bit)	10
Into the Eagle's Nest (ST Software)	11
Strip Poker (8bit and ST Software)	12
Slaygon (ST Software)	13
Detachable 1200XL Keyboard (8bit Hardware)	14
Flying the ST	16
GRAPHics Paper for Programmers (8bit)	17
ST Notes: NX-1000 Rainbow Printer	19
TrailBlazer (8bit and ST)	20
Learning Telecommunications Bit by Bit	22
Mark Williams C (ST)	26
Last Hacks	36

Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	29
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	30
GAG	(Flint, MI)	31
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	32
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	32
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	33
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	33
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	34
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	34

Advertisers

ST Informer	4
Innovative Concepts	5
Application and Design Software	8
State Street Computer	11
Proco Products	11
Quiet Lion	13
Soft House Computer Center	18
Komputer Korral	19
Terrific Corp.	20
Tech Specialities	21
United Computer	24
Computer Emporium	25
Astra Systems, Inc.	27
Underground Software	33
Brad Roltgen Enterprises	36
ISD Marketing	Inside Front Cover
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Special Thanks to Steve Volker of TAG for this month's cover art. Steve's company, **Graphicom Enterprises**, located in Saginaw, MI, will create computer graphics to fill your every need. And they do it on Atari STs! Call (517)793-2955 for more info. Look for more of Steve's excellent artwork in future issues of MAM.

From the Reader's Viewpoint

WAUG - A Growing Club???

I joined WAUG last year, at the first (Sept.) meeting of the year, right after the MAGIC show. There was a lot of interest that night, but only 10 or 15 members in attendance. I could see the officers of this club had a lot of potential: i.e. putting out their own newsletter in protest to disagreements with MAM, and having a speaker from a mail-order house. Not having a complete computer to do demos was a small disappointment. All this was going on in a public library basement.

Compared to what it once was, WAUG has come a long way: A club with 30 to 35 people at each meeting (70 members total) in a college classroom, a 20" monitor for demos and members willing to show their interests. Members are a little shy to ask questions, but it's still a big accomplishment by the officers, making this club a good source of information for Atari owners.

I feel that after the elections in June, the officers should be awarded with a dinner at Cottage Inn, paid by the members, and only for the officers. Thank you, WAUG officers.

But, and there is always a but, I also think WAUG could do more for the members or, to phase it better, the members can do more for the club to make the meetings more interesting.

What can you do for your club? Later in this article I will list some of the ideas I've devised to help WAUG. For example, I've volunteered my time and energy to be Magazine Librarian, besides bringing in my personal stockpile of old and new (preowned) 8bit software for sale. I hope someone carries on the magazine librarian's job when I step down to run for the 8bit librarian. I know there are members (not officers) willing to offer their time and services to the club, so why don't you?

I've compiled a list of ideas I have for our club, which could be adapted to any other club. This is not a complete list; you may have more or better ideas, but it will be a start, and something for us to discuss at upcoming meetings.

1. The club could use a people to hold 8bit or ST SIG meetings once a month at their home and give a report at the main club meeting.

2. More WAUG members should attend meetings, not just 30 percent but 100 percent! If every member attended and brought one person to join this year, we could be as big as MACE (maybe :>). WAUG is still growing and moving -- out of the small classroom into a computer store showroom. (See WAUG club minutes for details.)

3. Members should offer to demo new/old software/hardware and offer to bring in their hardware for the meeting. The club's equipment may not always be available every meeting. The ST used each month is brought in by a couple of members (Bill&Pattie), so if they leave or are unable to attend a meeting, we have no ST to show demos on. Plus, having more than one machine to show demos during and after the club's business reports would be a great benefit.

4. WAUG needs members to submit their favorite collection of public domain software to both the libraries for addition to the mass amount of software we already have now -- you can never have too much.

5. Someone could be in charge of running a *free* drawing at the club's meetings for an 8bit and ST disk to drum up interest in the software libraries, which is a club's bread and butter. If there is no interest in the club's software library then there will be no interest in the club. Members will go somewhere else and spend their money on someone else's library.

6. Articles for MAM are needed. I can't stress this point enough. Atari Corp. is not going to promote your favorite software/hardware or application technique, so you have to. If it is left to the editors of MAM to find/search for interesting articles for each issue, they will sooner or later stop for lack of interest. So, it is up to you to help keep Atari and MAM alive and well.

7. We need a volunteer for a remote users' secretary. We receive letters each month from Atarians all over asking about our club. We need someone to write to these people and mail them a listing of our disk libraries. If you are interested, why not come to one of the officers' meetings? You're always welcome; it's your club too. Doug, Craig and I have several letters that need to be addressed.

In closing, I'd like to remind you that Rick has volunteered his services and studio for MIDI SIG meetings, so contact him if you're interested and I hope to hear a SIG report at the next meeting. Also let's show some interest in the MIDI SIG. Who knows, we may be able to come up with a WAUG song/record good enough to hit the TOP 10!

Thank You, and Happy ATARIN'.
Michael Ranger

Atari News and Comment

News Anaylsis by John Nagy & Bill Rayl

Will Piracy Kill the ST?

WordPerfect, the biggest and long-awaited word processor many thought would finally bring respectability to the ST line almost got pulled off the market's shelves due to pirate BBSes...depending on who you believe. Several western BBSes were found offering the multi-disk $300+ commercial software package to anyone who called...and officials for WordPerfect had an understandable fit. In a phone call with representatives from the Atari ST SIG on CompuServe, the Word was Perfectly awful. The company consided pulling the word-processor out of the market, and vowed to have no further product or support for any Atari product.

An online conference was arranged, and by the time everyone got together, WordPerfect softened its position considerably. Many callers pointed out the software was almost useless without a complete manual, and it was so large almost noone had even bothered to download it from the pirate BBSes. In the end, WordPerfect said the product would stay on the market, although sales were slow. Further Atari software would certainly be "considered," but "much more market research would be done before any other projects" were undertaken.

Throughout the entire conference, and in messages and articles about the WordPerfect situation, was a strange and troubling apologistic attitude. Piracy was all but directly defended on terms such as lack of dealers, long delays between development and release, overpriced software, and "harmless limited distribution." Many in the conference and message areas spoke with obvious familiarity with the pirate BBSes in question. Some callers went so far as to suggest that the entire "pull-out" was either a publicity stunt to get the WordPerfect program talked about. Others hinted it was perhaps being done to ditch a troublesome product without taking responsibility for debugging and supporting it.

WAKE UP! Piracy will *always* be a *major* concern of software developers. When you have a machine that has a limited user base to begin with, a low-dollar user reputation to worsen the matter, you simply can't add "rampant" and rationalized piracy to the negatives. You simply provide a developer with all he needs to choose a more lucrative and appreciative audience. Meanwhile, many swipes have been taken at those who have attempted to stem the piracy tide. MichTron and the Software Publishers Association (SPA) have offered bounties for informers on pirate BBSes. This is called vigilante action by some, but these programs have not turned remarkable results, mostly because they require a verifiable phone number, password, SysOp's name, and address of the BBS. How many non-pirate BBSes have that much public information available? Come on, why can't the police and phone agencies get involved once a user with a verifiable password gets demonstrable pirate material?

As long as we wink at or turn the other cheek to piracy it will eat away at the only thing we can't do without -- developer support (of old software and good new software). Don't make excuses for yourself or others... Don't pass pirate software. Don't tolerate pirate BBSes.

Speaking of open piracy, how can it be that Atari people have such a bad reputation, yet every Computer Swap and Sale has at *least* one and often *several* booths of Commodore and IBM disk copiers in action. The "Any Program in this Bin -- $5 -- No Documentation" signs are truly amazing. I have never seen Atari programs hawked so openly... Could it actually be *only* because the market is too small? I prefer to think it is due to an overall more mature user base for the Atari machines. We must simply be aware it will also take fewer "bad apples" to spoil our smaller barrel!

On the ST Horizon

One of the hot new ST products that just hit the market is Turbo ST. a software substitute for the Blitter chip. With Turbo ST and the Unversal File Selector, Atari may be finding an easy way out of upgrading their ROMs! [Ed: See the Turbo ST review elsewhere in this issue]

Soon to be released by a company called MegaByte is a hardware modification that claims to give the ST a 16 mHz speedup. The process of "upgrading" involves yanking the 68000 chip (not for the weak of heart), installing MegaByte's hardware and putting the chip back in. To be sold at around $200, this product is reputed to speed up PC-Ditto to full IBM speeds! That may be one of it's biggest attractions. Currently, rumor has it the release of this product has been slowed because MegaByte is adding a place for current ST owners to pop in a Blitter chip. Another case of a third party making

Atari's life easier...if MegaByte adds Blitter support, Atari won't have to come out with its long-promised Blitter upgrade for current owners. And even before we could say, "What will they think of next?" MegaByte has announced "other products" allowing future expansion of the ST. What these products are have not been announced, but Atari was reportedly interested enough to give MegaByte a call to see what's up.

Bad News from Compute!

Readers of the May issue of Compute! magazine may have noticed the lack of 8bit Atari support...Bill Wilkinson's article was gone, type-in programs were gone and most telling, the list of computers supported by Compute! did not mention the 8bit Atari line at all! A reliable source inside Compute! has confirmed that they have indeed dropped the 8bit line and that Compute's ST will soon follow into oblivion. Compute! states that lack of ST computer sales makes publishing the separate magazine unprofitable. The ST will continue to be supported in the main magazine, but Compute's ST's days are numbered.

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Give a Turbo Boost to Your ST

Review by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

An amazing new piece of software has surfaced: Turbo-ST by Softrek. Just when you thought the ST wasn't being supported anymore, someone has to prove you wrong. The Softrek people have put together an improvement on a portion of the GEM operating system.

This program is 25K long, and replaces the "Bios function 3 and Gemdos function 9" routines with pure undiluted assembly language code. This speeds up the text display for page scroll up/down and line scroll up/down in any program using GEM. Results will vary depending on how often the program makes these calls and how much text is used within the program. But, generally speaking, Turbo-ST will show a definite increase in text updating speed to the screen. After using it, you won't be able to get along without it. Even the desktop comes up and scrolls faster. The program lists for 50 dollars, but sells for 41 dollars. It is not copy protected, and, as a desktop accessory, can be turned easily on or off.

By adjusting the "key repeat rate" on the control panel, you can change the line scroll rate to suit your needs. I've noticed a considerably increased speed while running Word Writer ST. But, First Cadd wouldn't even load with Turbo-ST installed -- my 520ST just locked up tight and I had to reboot.

Turbo-ST does what the blitter chip is supposed to do, with text only, and does it much faster -- plus it's available right now. Who knows when or if the blitter upgrade will ever be available for the ST. The author, Wayne Buckholdt, intends on supporting and making improvements to this program. He plans to upgrade all registered owners of Turbo-ST for only ten dollars.

So far, only Word Perfect, First Cadd, Fselect (PD) and Gulam (PD) will not work with Turbo-ST. Is this program worth buying? Only you can say for sure. I would rate its usefullness at 6.5 on a scale of 1 to 10. If you use a lot of text-oriented software, then it's worth having.

This program reminds me of another program, the Universal File Selector. It also replaces a portion of GEM and does it much better. I think I'm beginning to see a trend here. Wonder what's next?

Turbo-ST v1.0 by Softrek, written by Wayne Buckholdt P.O.Box 5257, Winter Park, Fla 32793 (305-657-4611)

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Building an ST Trackball

By Don Neff (MACE)

The Project

The Trackball, an old familiar peripheral in the Atari 8bit world, has suddenly been discovered by ST and IBM users. Trackballs are generally considered superior to their small cousin, the mouse, for CAD or fast games. First, the larger size of a trackball seems to permit finer control of the cursor during the delicate moves often encountered in CAD. Second, the stationary trackball can be used with wild abandon during a fast game, without worry of running out of room on the desktop (how many times have you slammed your mouse into the side of your computer at a crucial moment?).

While the IBM world seems to be filled with suppliers of trackballs, ST users must create their own. Most ST users create theirs by modifying an 8bit trackball such as the WICO Command Control or the Atari CX22 Trackball. This article gives you the information needed to convert either of these to ST mouse compatibility. The Atari CX22 conversion is easier to do than the WICO conversion. There are major differences in the two, so the modification process is covered here in several sections. The first sections cover things common to both the WICO and Atari trackballs. The next sections address the items which are specific to each one of them. These modification sections are followed by brief testing and trouble shooting sections.

The WICO conversion eliminates any possibility of using the WICO on an 8bit machine again. The Atari conversion, however, retains the original 8bit compatibility while adding ST Mouse compatibility.

Caveat

Both of the conversions seem deceptively simple because you will be either installing a single IC chip or adding a few new wires. However, every component or connection is critical and any error will result in a useless trackball (but no damage to your ST). Read and understand this entire article before modifying your trackball. If you have doubts about your understanding of any part of this article, get help before starting. The troubleshooting sections at the end of the article address only the most obvious problems. Be aware that the wire colors described from my trackballs may not match what you find in yours. Or, even worse, the colors match, but the wires are connected differently.

I am available at the WAUG and MACE meetings (or you can write to me through Michigan Atari Magazine) if you have questions. I do not have time to convert a trackball for you; you must do it yourself.

Buying the Trackball

The Atari CX22 Trackball is still available from some stores who sell Atari 2600/5200 game systems. I bought mine for $10 from the Kay Bee Hobby and Toy store at 12 Oaks shopping mall in Novi, Michigan. They still have dozens more they would like to part with.

Both the WICO and the Atari trackballs are frequently available (new and used) at Computer/Ham Radio flea markets. These flea markets are also a good source of other Atari parts, peripherals, books and software. (I am always amazed at the number of Apple, Commodore and IBM pirates openly selling pirated software complete with photo-copied documents at these events and wonder why Atarians are blamed for all piracy!)

Preparing the Trackball

Cut the cable off near the case and discard it. Turn the case upside down and remove the Phillips head screws which fasten the top and bottom pieces together. Hold the top and bottom pieces together with your fingers and turn the case right side up again. Gently ease the top of the case off the bottom piece. The Atari trackball case will require serious prying during the first 1/4 inch of separation.

Remove the cue ball, the two roller axles, the single bearing, all springs (if present) and put them in a safe place.

Preparing the New Cable

The new cable is made from a Radio Shack joystick extension cable (RS# 270-1705). Cut the male end (the DB9 plug with pins instead of holes) off of the new cable and throw it away. Trim the outer insulation back about six inches on the cut end of the cable to expose the nine individual wires inside. Strip and tin about 1/4 inch of the ends of the nine wires. Use your ohmmeter to identify which wire connects to each pin in the female DB9 plug on the cable. Label each wire with a small numbered tag (a friendly electrician can get wire labels for you) indicating the appropriate pin number for easy identification in later assembly steps. The wire from pin #5 can be cut short since we will not be using it at all. Form a strain relief at the cut end of the cable by applying a ring of epoxy around it. Atari CX22 owners should now skip to the section titled "Atari CX22 Conversion." WICO owners should continue on with the next section.

Building the WICO Circuit

Remove and discard the main circuit board from the WICO case, leaving the two LED opto-interrupter mounting boards in place in the case. The circuit described here will replace the original which you have discarded.

Figure 1 shows only one fourth of the necessary conversion circuit. The other three fourths are sim-

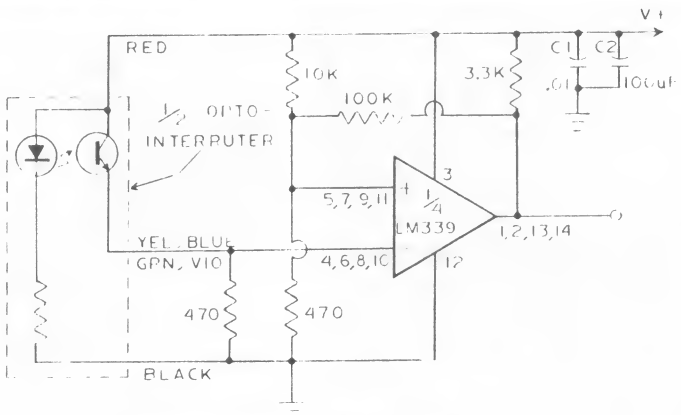


Figure 1: WICO Curcuit

ilar to this, but use different pins on IC1. If you don't know how to expand Figure 1 into the full circuit, get help. This step is the one most likely to cause serious problems (and frustration) for you.

IC1, an LM339 (RS# 276-1712), is four LM311 comparators in a single case, all sharing common power pins (#3 and 12). We will be using one comparator each, for left, right, up and down signals. Figure 2 shows the pin relationships for the inputs and outputs as we will be using them.

Build the circuit on a small circuit board (RS# 276-148) using a socket (RS# 276-1998) for IC1 (RS# 276-1712). C2 (RS# 272-1028) may be located any place in the case, but C1 (RS# 272-131) should be as close to IC1 as possible. The resistors (RS# 271-1317, 271-1328, 271-1335, 271-1347) may be mounted in any convenient location on the circuit board.

After the circuit is built, connect the wire from pin #1 of the DB9 plug on the new cable to pin #1 of IC1. Connect the wire from pin #2 of the cable to pin #2 of IC1. Connect the wire from pin #3 of the cable to pin #13 of IC1. Connect the wire from pin #4 of the cable to pin #14 of IC1. Those are the up, down, left, and right signal paths to the mouse port.

Connect the wire from pin #7 of the DB9 plug on the new cable to pin #3 (V+) of IC1. Connect the wire from pin #8 of the new cable to pin #12 (ground) of IC1. These are the V+ and ground points for other parts of the circuit too, so leave room to connect other wires at these points.

WICO Triggers

The WICO has only one trigger button, SW1, so you must add the second one, SW2 (RS# 275-1566). Select a convenient spot on the top of the case where the new switch will not interfere with anything inside the case. Drill a 3/8 inch hole in the chosen spot. Insert switch SW2 in the hole and fasten it in place with the supplied retaining nut. Connect one terminal of SW2 to any ground connection and connect the other terminal to the wire going to pin #9 of the DB9 plug on the new cable.

Cut the 11-connection plug off of the wires from the two LED opto-interrupter circuit boards which remain in the case. Two of the wires (white in mine) from this plug are for the original trigger switch, SW1. Connect one of these white wires to any ground point, and connect the other to the wire from pin #6 of the new cable. Figure 3 shows how the trigger button connections relate to the DB9 plug.

Each of the two LED opto-interrupter mounting boards has four wires coming from it. Two of these wires (red and black in mine) are the power feeds for the LEDs. Connect the two red wires to the V+ source (pin # 7 of the new cable) and connect the two black wires to ground (pin #8 of the new cable).

The remaining four wires (yellow, blue, violet, and green in mine) carry the trigger signals to the four comparators. Connect the yellow wire to pin #6 of IC1. Connect the green wire to pin #4 of IC1. Connect the blue wire to pin #10 of IC1. Connect the violet wire to pin #8 of IC1. Figure 2 shows the color and pin number relationship.

Before you place IC1 in its socket, plug the WICO trackball into your mouse port and turn the ST on. Use a voltmeter to insure you have +5 volts at pin #3 and ground at pin #12 of the IC socket.

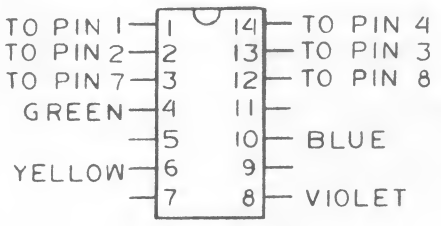


FIgure 2: IC1

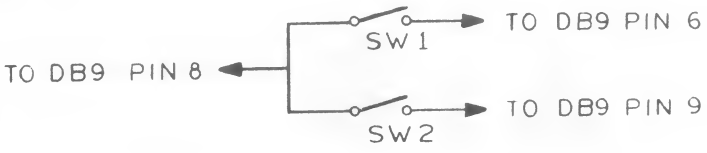


Figure 3: Trigger Buttons

Next, check both of the opto-interrupter boards to insure you have +5 volts on their red wires and ground on their black wires. Unplug the WICO trackball from the ST and insert IC1 into its socket. Refer now to the section about testing your modified trackball.

Atari CX22 Conversion

Leave the original circuit board in the case; it already contains the circuit which WICO owners must build. We will be adding a new computer cable, one switch, and connecting several new wires to the original board. Remove the remaining short piece of black insulation from the stub of the original connector cable and separate the individual wires. Strip and tin about 1/4 inch of the free end of each wire. Six of these wires are attached to J1, the circuit board connector strip located in the rear left corner of the circuit board. Four of the six wires from J1 will be soldered to the new switch as shown in Figure 4. Connect the black wire from pin 1 (ground) of J1 to the wire from pin 8 of the DB9 plug on the new cable. Connect the orange wire from pin 2 (V+) of J1 to the wire from pin 7 of the DB9 plug on the new cable.

The new switch is a four pole, double throw (4PDT) which is available from most Ham Radio or electronics stores (but not Radio Shack). These switches are often available for less than a dollar

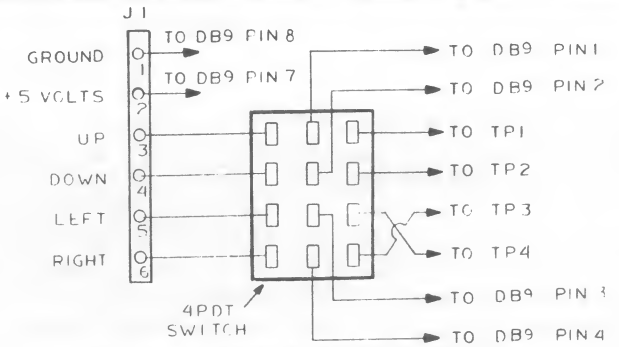
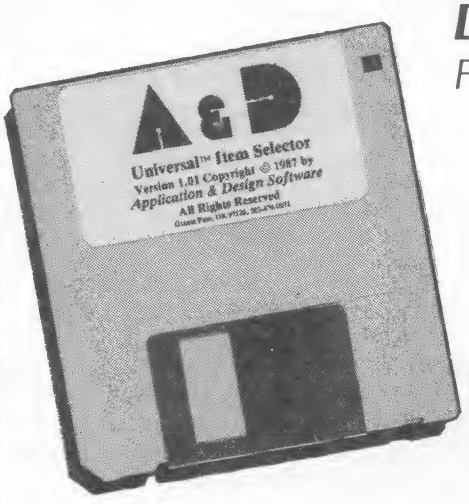


Figure 4: Atari Switch

at the Computer/Ham Radio flea markets mentioned earlier. Locate a convenient place for the switch and drill a mounting hole in the case for it.

Figure 4 shows the wiring scheme of this switch which allows you to change from 8-bit to ST compatibility. The ST signals are picked up at the four points labeled TP1-4 in the front left corner of the circuit board. TP1 and TP2 are the left/right connections; TP3 and TP4 are the up/down connections. Solder a 9-inch piece of wire to each of these 4 points. Connect the wires from pins 3-6 of J1, the wires from pins 1-4 of the DB9 plug, and wires from TP1-4 to the 4PDT switch as shown in Figure 4. Now mount the switch in the hole you drilled earlier, and fasten it in place with the mounting nut.



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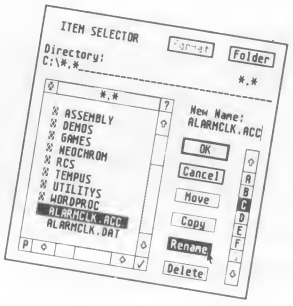

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Atari Trigger Buttons

The Atari trackball already has two trigger buttons installed, but they are connected together with two wires. One wire (black in mine) is connected to ground through pin #1 of J1 and should not be cut. The other wire (red in mine) should be cut near the terminal on the left trigger button.

Notice there are two red wires at this terminal; cut only the one from the right trigger button. Connect the red wire from the right button to the wire from pin #9 of the DB9 plug on the new cable. Connect the red wire you left attached to the left trigger button, to the wire from pin #6 of the new cable. Figure 3 shows how the trigger button connections relate to the DB9 plug.

Plug the Atari trackball into your mouse port and turn the ST on. Use a voltmeter to insure you have +5 volts at pin #3 and ground at pin #12 of A1, the LM339 chip.

Testing Your Trackball

Reinstall the springs, roller axles, single bearing and cue ball. Do not put the top on the case yet. Plug the trackball into the mouse port again and watch the action of the cursor as you move the cue ball. If the cursor moves in the proper direction in relation to the cue ball, you can go to the section titled "Finishing the Trackball."

If the cursor movements do not reflect your test movements of the cue ball, write notes about which direction the cursor moves in relation to left, right, up and down movements of the cue ball. Unplug the trackball and compare your notes to the tips in the appropriate trouble shooting section below.

WICO Troubleshooting

This section is useful only if your finished WICO trackball is working, but the cursor is moving in the wrong direction. If your finished trackball is completely dead, check all of your wiring connections against Figures 1, 2 and 3.

If your notes show the cursor moved left as you moved the cue ball to the right, and vice versa, you should reverse the connections of the yellow and green wires. Connect the yellow wire to pin #4 of IC1 and the green wire to pin #6.

If your notes show the cursor moved up as you moved the cue ball down, and vice versa, you should reverse the connections of the blue and violet wires. Connect the blue wire to pin #8 of IC1 and the violet wire to pin #10.

If your notes show the cursor moved up or down as you moved the cue ball left or right, you should reverse the connections of the yellow/green pair of wires with the blue/violet pair of wires. Connect the green wire to pin #10, connect the blue wire to pin #4, connect the yellow wire to pin #8, and connect the violet wire to pin #6 of IC1. Now return to the trackball testing section above and perform the tests again. Keep in mind that if the left/right movements are reversed, you must now swap the connections of the blue and violet wires. Likewise, if the up/down movements are reversed, you must now swap the yellow and green wire.

Atari CX22 Troubleshooting

This section is useful only if your finished Atari CX22 trackball is working, but the cursor is moving in the wrong direction. If your finished trackball is completely dead, set the new switch to its other position and try again. If the trackball is dead in both switch positions, check all of your wiring connections against Figures 3 and 4.

If your notes show the cursor moved left as you moved the cue ball to the right, and vice versa, you should reverse the connections of the wires at TP1 and TP2.

If your notes show the cursor moved up as you moved the cue ball down, and vice versa, you should reverse the connections of the wires at TP3 and TP4.

If your notes show the cursor moved left or right as you moved the ball up or down, you should exchange the pair of wires at TP1 and TP2 with the pair of wires at TP3 and TP4. Now return to the trackball testing section and perform the tests again.

Finishing the Trackball

Unplug the trackball and prepare to install the top piece of the case. Place the new cord in the cut-out at the back of the case. Make sure the epoxy strain relief on the cable is on the inside of the case wall. Check all wiring to make sure no wires can move close to the axles, wheels or the cue ball. Loose wires should be secured to the case with a drop of rubber adhesive or silicon sealant.

When all wires are secured out of the way, set the top in place and rotate the cue ball. If the ball rotates freely, you can turn the case over and reinstall the screws to hold the top and bottom pieces together.

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Number Three in a Series by Gayle Sims (c) 1988

Does everyone have disks and notebooks handy for this edition of our ACTION! tutorial? I hope so, because in this episode, I will introduce you to one of the main modules of ACTION!, the 'Editor', and some of the most used commands. You will use the editor each and every time you work with ACTION!, so you will need to become very familiar with it!!!

Once you have booted up your system, you will find yourself in the editor. I showed you how to select certain options (in our last episode) before each programming session. Once you have done that, type 'E' on the command line to return to the editor.

ACTION! does not care how you enter your code, or if it is uneven and unformatted. For your sake, I hope you will begin to format all of your coding! It will make your code a lot easier to look at the next time! The editor even allows you to compose your source code on your favorite word processor and import it into the editor, thus making use of the fine features of many word processors such as search and replace and macro entry.

The editor, when you first enter it, is in 'replace' mode. This means everything you type will be typed exactly and any existing text will be overwritten as you go. To place text in front of existing text, or anywhere else, you need 'insert' mode, <CNTRL><SHIFT>I. The new text you enter will be placed wherever you happened to have the cursor, and all other text after it will be pushed over without being rewritten. The <CNTRL><SHIFT>I toggles the feature, so if you wish to go back to replace mode, just enter the command again.

To clear an *entire* file, just enter <SHIFT><CLEAR> and everything will be erased, and you will be given a clean workspace. Once you have erased this text, it is gone for good, so please be careful!!!

Now, unless you want to enter the same text over and over again, you'll need to know how to save and load your files to disk. <CNTRL><SHIFT>W will prompt you with 'Write?' and you enter 'Dx:MYFILE.ACT', where 'x' is the device number you are going to use, and MYFILE.ACT is the name of the source code you want to save.

Remember, ACTION! works with a RAMDISK, so be sure not to forget to copy your files from RAM to a real disk before turning off your machine!

Once the file is saved, you load it, or any other source code file, back at any time. <CNTRL><SHIFT>R will prompt you with 'Read?'. Just enter the file path and name, such as "Dx:MYFILE.ACT." The .ACT extension reminds you that it is ACTION! source code, and not a compiled program.

The following command list will allow you to move around inside the editor, along with edit the text, and store or retrieve it from disk:

<CNTRL><left arrow> Moves your cursor one character to the left
<CNTRL><right arrow> Moves your cursor one character to the right
<CNTRL><up arrow> Moves your cursor one LINE above
<CNTRL><down arrow> Moves your cursor one LINE down
<CNTRL><SHIFT> > Moves your cursor to the end of the current line
<CNTRL><SHIFT> < Moves your cursor to the beginning of the current line
<CNTRL><SHIFT>H Takes you to the beginning of the file
<CNTRL><SHIFT>E Takes you to the end of the file
<CNTRL><SHIFT>F Allows you to 'find' a certain text field in your file <ENTER> after the first occurrence of your 'find' field will bring up the next one, if there are any more.
<CNTRL><DELETE> Deletes the character under the cursor, one at a time
<SHIFT><DELETE> Deletes the line your cursor is currently on
<CNTRL><SHIFT>U Restores the line you just deleted (if you have moved from the line you deleted, it will not work)
<SHIFT><INSERT> Inserts a line at your cursor's position
<CNTRL><INSERT> Inserts a space at your cursor's position
<CNTRL><SHIFT>R Read/Load file from disk (including text from other editors)
<CNTRL><SHIFT>W Write/Save file to disk

If you wish to import text from other editors, be sure that your lines are no longer than 79 characters, and end with EOL's, or <RETURN>. You can make any modifications once you have entered it into the ACTION! editor.

Once you have learned these simple commands, the rest of the work will come rather easily! Practice until next time!!!

I can be reached by US Mail at: Gayle R. Sims, Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005

Into the Eagle's Nest

Reviewed by Bill Boles (MACE)

Well now.... Are we all ready for a little Deja-Vu?... Yes?... OK then, How many of you remember a program for the 8bits entitled Castle Wolfenstein... You know, the one in which you play the part of an allied soldier sent into a Nazi fortress to recover some secret plans? Well, Mindscape Inc. has released "Into the Eagle's Nest" for the ST. A game which is very similar to "Castle".

In this game, you also play a soldier given the task of accomplishing one of four tasks which is as follows: 1.) blow up the fortress; 2.) rescue a prisoner and blow up the fortress; 3.) rescue two prisoners and you know what; 4.) rescue three prisoners and once again blow up the fortress.

The games action is seen from above. By using the joystick (A big improvement over Castle Wolfenstein's clumsy Start, Select, and Option button control scheme), the player may move about, pick items up, unlock doors or shoot them open, and of course, shoot guards and officers.

Play begins on the ground floor of the fortress and the player may move about on the current level or take the elevator to another floor (provided he finds an elevator pass). As the game progresses, the player will come up against hundreds of guards, many in very large groups. These must be shot twice in order to kill them, and it must be done without any contact with your soldier, for when they touch you they inflict damage. Officers are a different matter... These guys just sit at the tables sleeping, and can be killed with no damage done to your character.

You must keep yourself armed with ammo at all times. Stacks of ammo are located all over the place and can be picked up by walking over them. also sprinkled about is food for your character, pendants and paintings which are worth points, keys to open steel doors, elevator passes, dynamite which, when shot will end your game real quick, and chests. The chests are like those found in "Castle" meaning you must shoot them to open them. Take care however. Some of those chests contain dynamite and again will end your game.

Once you obtain an elevator pass, you may get on the elevator (represented as a large square) and using the joystick, select the floor you wish to visit. When you find the detonator (or found the prisoner(s) and then the detonator) you may then destroy the fortress and save the day for the Allies. To do this, you merely shoot the detonator.

In all, despite the fact that "Nest" is just a clone of "Castle," it is far better than the older program. the sound, graphics and the easy to use controls make this one worth having. It is the kind of game that grows on you and makes you try it "Just one more time!".

On a scale of 1 to 10, I give this one an 8.

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By that, I mean that certain objects of interest are centered too high on the torso, and extend far too high into the atmosphere for even a well-endowed female, who happens to be reposing on her back. If I am not correct in this, then perhaps I have missed something, other than the barbaric use of silicon, in my life.

Second, and more difficult to discuss politely, they both ... er. ... well, both ladies are shown as ... you know, nude ... like totally nude ... oh, dammit, they're shaved!

That's it: shaved and depraved! And if you listen to me, your money should be saved.

Much as I hate to admit it, Playboy is a better purchase if you want to look at naked women. Strip Poker was a waste of my money, and I cannot understand what it is that is making people buy the additional disks once they have had a chance to see the original product. Motes in the eyes of the beholders, I guess.

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Slaygon

ST Software Review by Steve Mileski (GLASS)

Your Mission...to infiltrate and destroy the headquarters of the evil Cybordynamics! Your World...the halls and rooms of the corporation, filled with locked doors, enemy robots, force fields, ion-beams, and land mines. Your Vehicle... Slaygon, a supertank of your own design.

This is not an adventure where you can just go in and shoot everything up, it requires wits, strategy, and yes, a little luck.

Slaygon is a mouse-controlled graphics maze game where you pilot your tank in search of the tools you need to destroy the facility. Your view is through the control panel which allows you to control your plotter, scanner, sensors, laser, cloaker, and shields. Part of the viewscreen contains the map your plotter draws as you maneuver the passages, if you have it on. Of course, use of every thing takes energy and when your energy is gone you die, but careful use of equipment keeps you moving until you can replenish it. There are eight storage holds to store found items until needed.

The graphics are, if repetitious, impressive. The playaction with the mouse is convenient, as are the selection and uses of equipment and items. Your game can be saved and reloaded to continue later, however, only one game can be saved on a disk. Slaygon comes on two disks: disk A is copy-protected (too bad) but disk B isn't. The B disk is where the game is saved, so if you have spare disks more games can be saved.

The only improvements I would add to the game would be a magnify for the map, it's small and hard to read, and tank movement using the cursor arrows (and the mouse) for rapid movement though known territory.

The game is addictive and keeps me coming back for more. The 16-page manual that comes with the game is enjoyable, informative, and well written. It also includes a Game Hints section. This section could be sealed so you don't accidentally view it before you are ready; this happened to me.

A final note: Leaving the game returns you to the GEM Desktop so you don't have to re-boot, something not found in many popular games.

I think that Slaygon will be an entertainment hit. Slaygon, at $39.95 retail, is brought to you by MicroDeal, who also handles games like Time Bandits, Air Ball, Leather Neck, and Gold Runner.

MicroDeal is a sister company of MichTron, of Pontiac, Michigan. An agreement between the two companies leaves MicroDeal handling entertainment software while MichTron handles productivity software. They both have an American and European branch.

Watch for good quality releases from the companies in the near future.

Detachable 1200XL Keyboard for Your 8bit Atari

By Kip Kiefer (MACE)

Several years ago, I bought an Atari 800 parts kit (a non-working unit) and had it working within a few minutes. It had a bad voltage regulator and I had a replacement laying on my work bench, which explains the expedience of repair.

The only thing that still needed to be repaired was the keyboard. Half of the key-tops were missing; a couple of the others weren't working. Since I wanted to use the computer right away, I found a cheap substitute keyboard at Radio Shack -- an Atari 1200XL keyboard (Cat.#277-1018).

Of course, it required a little work to wire it up to the computer. What's required is bringing the inputs of the 1200XL's keyboard encoder chips out to the adapter cable connecting the keyboard to the computer. Everything you need to do this can be found at Radio Shack. The following is a list of parts and tools you will need.

First the tools: (1) 25 watt soldering iron & solder; (1) solder wick, solder sucker or equivalent; (1) #0 Phillips screwdriver; (1) pair of wire strippers; (1) pair of diagonal wire cutters

Now for the parts: (1) Atari 1200XL keyboard part #ca060046 (Radio Shack #277-1018); (2) 16-pin low profile IC sockets (16-pin dip sockets); (2) 16-pin dip headers (no ribbon wires attached); (1) 5-foot piece of 25-conductor ribbon wire (Radio Shack #278-772); (1) pack "assorted" heat shrink tubing; (1) pair of mating connectors (with at least 22 pins). To make assembly easier, the instructions will be broken down into several parts.

Preparing the Keyboard

Place the keyboard face down on a table or work bench. Leave the keyboard in this position until its reassembly is completed. Don't start this project if you don't have the time to complete this section at one time. Remove the screws from the keyboard (qty:21 screws). Lift the PC board off the keyboard. (Warning: Do not attempt to remove the plastic from the PC board, as this will damage the keyboard.) Using the soldering iron (and solder wick or solder sucker), remove the two 4051 IC chips (take note where pin #1 is.). Also remove the 15-pin connector (and wire). Solder the two 16-pin IC sockets in place of the two 4051 IC's that you've just removed. (Locate pin #1 of the IC socket in the same position as pin #1 of the 4051 IC chip.) Place the PC board on the keyboard and re-install the screws. You may turn the keyboard over now.

Making the Adapter Cable

To make it easier to understand, I'm going to call the two chips on the Atari 1200XL keyboard A1 & A2. These aren't Atari's official part designations, but since I've never seen a parts list or a schematic for the 1200XL, they will do. In Fig. 1, you will see the layout of the 1200XL keyboard bottom. The chart also shown in Fig. 1 shows the equivalent chips for the other models. In Fig. 2, you'll see the connections required to connect the 1200XL keyboard to your computer. The two 16-pin dip headers plug into the IC sockets that you've installed; you will be soldering wires onto the dip headers and the keyboard connector pads per Fig. 2. I'll let you decide which kind of connector you wish to use.

One tip is to wire the adapter cable so the connector (mounted on the computer case) pin connections match your computer keyboard's connections. This will keep your connections more straightforward. The best place to mount a connector for the keyboard on a Atari 400 or 800 is on the left side of the computer (the side opposite the power connector).

This is how I did it. Being somewhat of a scavenger at heart, what I used for connectors was somewhat different than their normal application.

I used a 22-pin Cinch (double-sided) edge connector (wired to the computer keyboard connector per Fig. 3) and a single-side PC (Printed Circuit) Board completed the connection. The PC board is cut short per Fig. 4. If you're wiring the keyboard per the chart in Fig. 3, your keyboard should look like Fig. 5 when you're done.

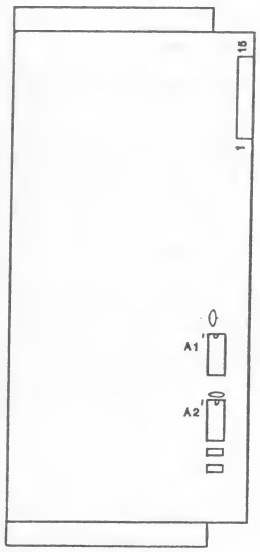
Figure 6 shows the Cinch connector as viewed from the rear. Figure 7 shows how to dress the wires from the 1200XL keyboard. The reason I wired the connector in the manner I did (per Fig. 3), was so I wouldn't have to worry about the connector's polarity (you can plug it in either way and it works the same), which may make the routing of the keyboard cable easier.

The Way I Didn't Tell You About

The reason that I didn't tell you about this last way of connecting the 1200XL keyboard is that it has the least amount of options. You can only have the 1200XL keyboard operational (not the original keyboard or a optional keypad). An additional drawback to this method is the increased possibility of shorting out the 5-volt power supply. It requires the removal of the computer's keyboard encoder chips, and the adapter cable will run from the 1200XL keyboard connector to two 16-pin dip headers plugged into the computer's keyboard encoder chip sockets (see Fig. 8).

I do not recommend using this last method of connecting the keyboard to your computer. Although it would put your computer into the same configuration as the 1200XL, the drawbacks outweigh the benefits.

FIGURE 1
1200XL KEYBOARD BOTTOM VIEW



1200 XL	400	800	800XL	800XL	130XE
A1	Z102	Z103	U22	U24	U24
A2	Z101	Z104	U23	U25	U25

FIGURE 2

1200 XL	400	800	800XL 600XL	130XE 65XE
A1-14	1	1	1	13
A1-1	2	2	2	14
A1-2	3	3	3	12
A1-15	4	4	4	15
A1-4	5	5	5	7
A1-13	6	6	6	18
A1-12	7	7	7	5
A1-5	8	8	8	8
K-1	9	9	9	20
A2-1	10	10	10	19
A2-2	11	11	11	4
A2-15	12	12	12	6
A2-4	13	13	13	9
A2-5	14	14	14	10
A2-14	15	15	15	11
A2-13	16	16	16	17
A2-12	17	17	17	16
K-10	18	J114-1	23	24
K-13	19	J114-3	21	23
K-12	20	J114-2	22	22
K-11	21	J114-4	20	21
K-14	22	GND	18	3

A1-X = CHIP A1, PIN X
A2-X = CHIP A2, PIN X
K-X = KEYBOARD PIN X

FIGURE 3

1200 XL	KEY-BD. SIDE	COMPUTER SIDE	400	800
A1-14	1	1,Z	1	1
A1-1	2	2,Y	2	2
A1-2	3	3,X	3	3
A1-15	4	4,W	4	4
A1-4	5	5,V	5	5
A1-13	6	6,U	6	6
A1-12	7	7,T	7	7
A1-5	8	8,S	8	8
K-1	9	9,R	9	9
A2-1	10	10,P	10	10
A2-2	11	11,N	11	11
A2-15	12	12,M	12	12
A2-4	13	13,L	13	13
A2-5	14	14,K	14	14
A2-14	15	15,J	15	15
A2-13	16	16,H	16	16
A2-12	17	17,F	17	17
K-10	18	18,E	18	J114-1
K-13	19	19,D	19	J114-3
K-12	20	20,C	20	J114-2
K-11	21	21,B	21	J114-4
K-14	22	22,A	22	GND

A1-X = CHIP A1, PIN X
A2-X = CHIP A2, PIN X
K-X = KEYBOARD CONNECTOR, PIN X

FIGURE 4

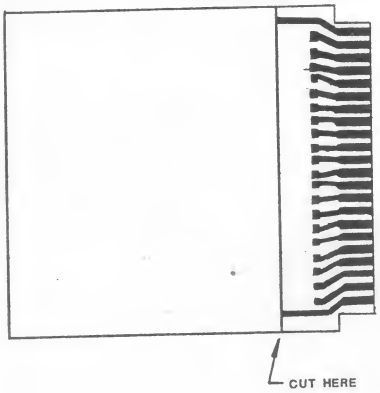


FIGURE 5

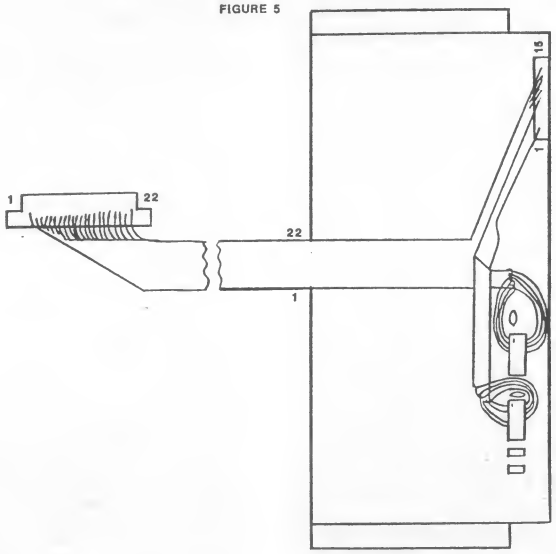


FIGURE 6

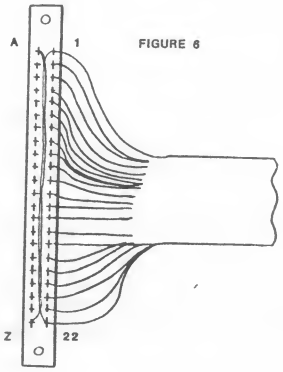


FIGURE 7

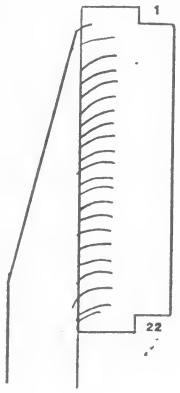


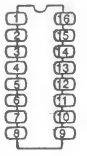
FIGURE 8

1200 XL	SOURCE/ FUNCTION
1	CTRL/ SHIFT/ BREAK
2	NC
3	A2-3
4	A2-11
5	A2-10
6	A2-9
7	A1-11
8	A1-10
9	A1-9
10	RESET
11	START
12	SELECT
13	OPTION
14	GND
15	+5V

FIGURE 9 — MISC. DIAGRAMS

RESET	START	OPTION	F1	F2	F3	F4	HELP	ATARI	BREAK

TYPICAL IC PIN CONFIGURATION



Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the world of Atari St computers

Saving Time... or at least that's what they told me when I bought this thing!

Buying a computer is a lot like smoking or taking drugs. There are lots of deterrents to doing it, but people just keep on buying them anyway. The general premise for buying a computer is that it will *save you time...*supposedly one of our most expensive commodities and something most of us do not wish to waste (well, perhaps with the exception of those few Sunday afternoons when we vegetate in preparation of another hectic monday).

Anyway, while it is certainly true that a computer CAN save you a lot of time and effort - in the long run, it is also quite true to say that they require some very substantial up front investments of time and energy to get to the point where they become productive functional tools. If the primary purpose of your computer system is entertainment, then all of this is redundant of course, but it would be a safe bet to say that the majority of ST users are what I refer to as complete computerists. That is to say, people who use their systems for a wide range of applications.

One might presume that I know a fair bit about computers, after all, they have been part of my life for a number of years now. They stare at me from the desk at the office, and there are certainly enough of them around the sanctum sanctorum here to warrant some degree of agreement that I know a lot about them. I have used computers for word processing for so long now that I would have to hire someone to change the ribbon on the typewriter that now graces a back corner of a desk, long since cluttered with last month's articles and a variety of computer related advertisements. They also do all of my Database work, spreadsheets, and by gosh, the occasion adventure game has been known to slip into high gear once in a while when the time comes to say, break for a moment of insanity. All of this variety makes you as an individual more of an expert within the parameters of the system you apply your skill to.

The truth of the matter is that what you know about your personal computer today is relative only to today, and true only of yesterday. Things change so fast that by the time you become expert in one area, it has either become redundant due to technological change or outdated by updates to the software you doubtless spent big bucks on.

The true computer neophyte needs to constantly absorb new information, assimilate new data, and learn new concepts to simply keep abreast of what the computer world is all about. It becomes a degree or two more difficult if one attempts to maintain a high level of information about more than one type of computer.

Only the staunchest computerist will do that. Perhaps we should consider it a triumph if we can be informed and informative about our main interest, the Atari ST and MEGA series of computers. That by itself is no easy feat since we are seeing such a surge of new and well-written software.

Presumably it is fair to say that the majority of us are not, nor do we want to be tecchies (That's not the same as a Trekkie, but close enuff !). Let's leave the repairs to experts. However, we can all be well-skilled and competent in the area of application, and software.

It has always impressed me that MS-DOS people, you know, the IBM types, are generally very well-skilled in one or two areas with their computers. I have met people, for instance, who can tell you every keystroke required to underline a word in Word Perfect (a horrible program to use on the IBM, by the way, compared to the ST), yet who are totally incapable of using their computer for budget preparation or preparing a simple drawing on the screen. These are computer users only, not computer enthusiasts as we know them. Now nothing here suggests that we should think any less of people like that. After all, most of them do not have home computer systems.

ST owners for the most part, I am delighted to say, are real computer users. Almost all people I know who own ST computers use them for a wide range of applications. Yes, we all do have a favourite use for them, but I dare say that most of us use them for everything from their inevitable game play to serious uses such as interactive music via the MIDI interface and sophisticated drawing by means of CAD programs and their related programs.

Many people now use their computers in the rapidly growing field of Desktop publishing. (no kidding !) If a biography is ever written for the ST, it will have to include the impact the ST will have made to this field. Many of my friends now own 24-pin printers or laser printers and have started cottage industries selling professional page layout services. It's nice to see people expanding what was once a hobby into a part-time occupation, or even a full-time business.

In addition to these program applications, there are many graphic design programs and complex, colorful computer drawing by means of a number of well-written Graphics drawing programs such as Degas Elite. Finally, there is a dynamic and growing field of creative programming through the ever-expanding range of languages for the ST.

Many of these applications are part of the normal use for most ST computers. Perhaps this is because most ST systems sold to date still find their way into the home environment, rather than offices. What that eventually does, more by accident than design, is to make ST users very well-informed about their computers. It does force owners to learn a lot on their own, an experience that can be frustrating and rewarding. Since the ST and MEGA have yet to make any significant dent on the office market, the question is whether that will eventually change and whether Atari itself wants it to.

I suspect that Atari still has not made a real commitment to bringing the machine into the business world because they still do not have the required channels to market their systems, and in part because they do not wish to invest the capital required to advertize them properly.

For us, perhaps that's not such a bad thing. It does in the end, make us better, and wiser users, with a genuine need to come together in groups like M.A.C.E. to share our common experiences. It certainly does much to help move these systems into genuine time savers, and that's the bottom line for all of us.

GRAPHics Paper for 8bit Programmers

by Bob Retelle, Copyright 1988

When programming in one of the Atari's several text modes, it's sometimes nice to create a customized layout on paper first, before coding in the lines which will create a display on the screen. If you've tried using normal graph paper for this however, you've no doubt discovered that the spaces which characters occupy on the screen are *not* square! A layout created on squared off graph paper may look stretched and distorted when viewed on the computer's screen.

With this in mind, I wrote this little program which will print graph paper whose proportions match those of several of the Atari text modes. This version works with an Epson printer, or one which emulates the Epson.When you run the program, it will ask you which Graphics Mode you want to print graph paper for. You can choose among modes zero, one or two. These also correspond to the multi-color Antic modes four and five for multi-colored character graphics.

Be sure your printer is turned on, and online, then press any key to start printing. Because the graph paper is printed using the high resolution graphics capabilities of the printer, it will take several minutes to finish each page. If you plan to be using a lot of copies, it would probably be faster and easier to just print one of each mode and have them photocopied. I generally just print one or two at the beginning of each programming project.

Each sheet contains spaces for you to identify the screen by the name of the program, it's current revision number, and the date. The rows and columns are also numbered along the edges, to allow easy calculation of *position* statements.

Using this little printer utility, you should be able to design all kinds of terrific looking custom screens for all your programming projects!

```
10 REM ATARI GRAPHICS PAPER
15 REM MARCH 1988 by ROBERT J. RETELLE
20 REM PRINTS GRAPH PAPER PROPORTIONED TO FIT ATARI TEXT MODES 0-2
25 REM CAN ALSO BE USED FOR GRAPHICS MODE 3 AND MULTI-COLORED TEXT MODES IR4 AND IR5
30 REM
35 REM
40 OPEN #1,4,0,"K:":REM OPEN KEYBOARD FOR INPUT
50 PRINT CHR$(125):REM CLEAR SCREEN
60 PRINT :PRINT "WHICH GRAPHICS MODE DO YOU WANT TO  PRINT GRAPH PAPER FOR? (0-2)";:GET #1,A
70 GMODE=A-48:PRINT GMODE:IF GMODE<0 OR GMODE>2 THEN 50
80 PRINT :PRINT "MAKE SURE PRINTER IS SET UP":PRINT "THEN PRESS ANY KEY TO START":GET #1,A
90 PRINT :PRINT "PRINTING GRAPHICS PAPER FOR MODE ";GMODE
100 TRAP 3000
1000 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(64):REM RESET PRINTER
1010 LPRINT "PROGRAM:_____
REVISION:_____  DATE:_____"
1020 LPRINT
1030 REM CREATE STRINGS TO HOLD BIT PATTERNS
1040 DIM A$(432),X$(433),B$(41)
1100 A$(1)=CHR$(1):A$(432)=CHR$(1):A$(2)=A$:REM HORIZONTAL STRAIGHT LINE
1110 B$(1,1)=CHR$(255):REM VERTICAL LINE
1120 IF GMODE=2 THEN 1160
1130 FOR I=2 TO 18:B$(I,I)=CHR$(0):NEXT I:REM FILL LINE SEGMENT WITH BLANKS
1140 X=1:FOR I=1 TO 24:X$(X,X+18)=B$:X=X+18:NEXT I:X$(432,432)=CHR$(255):REM REPLICATE SEGMENT 24 TIMES
1150 GOTO 1200
1160 FOR I=2 TO 36:B$(I,I)=CHR$(0):NEXT I:REM FILL LINE SEGMENT WITH BLANKS
1170 X=1:FOR I=1 TO 12:X$(X,X+36)=B$:X=X+36:NEXT I:X$(432,432)=CHR$(255):REM REPLICATE SEGMENT 12 TIMES
1200 GOSUB 5000:REM PRINT TOP NUMBER LINE
1300 X=39:IF GMODE>0 THEN X=19
1400 FOR I=0 TO X
1500 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(8);CHR$(27);CHR$(75);CHR$(176);CHR$(1);A$:REM PRINT HORIZONTAL LINE
1510 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(75);CHR$(176); CHR$(1);X$;" ";I:REM PRINT VERTICAL LINES AND RIGHT HAND COLUMN NUMBER
1520 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(1);CHR$(27);CHR$(75);CHR$(176);CHR$(1);X$:REM PRINT VERTICAL LINES
1530 IF GMODE=0 THEN 1560
1540 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(7):REM ADVANCE PAPER 7 DOTS
1550 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(1);CHR$(27);CHR$(75);CHR$(176);CHR$(1);X$:REM PRINT VERTICAL LINES FOR MODE 2
1560 NEXT I
1570 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(8);CHR$(27);CHR$(75);CHR$(176);CHR$(1);A$:REM PRINT LAST HORIZONTAL LINE
1580 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(65);CHR$(3):REM ADVANCE PAPER FOR ROW NUMBER LINE
1590 GOSUB 5000:REM PRINT BOTTOM ROW NUMBER LINE
1600 LPRINT CHR$(27);CHR$(64):REM RESET PRINTER
1700 PRINT :PRINT "CONTINUE? (Y/N)":GET #1,A:IF A=89 THEN RUN
1800 END
3000 PRINT :PRINT :PRINT "PRINTER DOES NOT RESPOND!":REM ERROR TRAPPING
3010 PRINT :PRINT "CHECK PRINTER AND INTERFACE,"
3020 PRINT "THEN PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE."
3030 GET #1,A:GOTO 80
5000 IF GMODE=2 THEN LPRINT "....11....10.....9.....8.....7.....6....5.....4.....3.....2.....1.....0":RETURN
5010 LPRINT ".23.22.21.20.19.18.17.16.15.14.13.12.11.10.9..8..7..6..5..4..3..2..1..0":RETURN
5020 REM *NOTE* THE PERIODS IN THE ABOVE LINES ARE ONLY TO SHOW HOW MANY SPACES SHOULD GO BETWEEN THE NUMBERS... DON'T TYPE THEM! USE SPACES!
```

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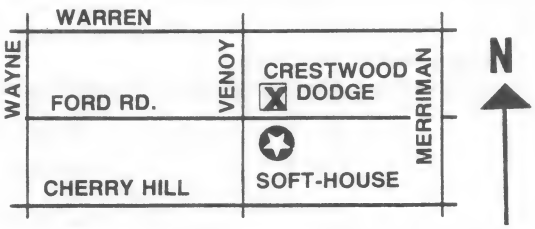

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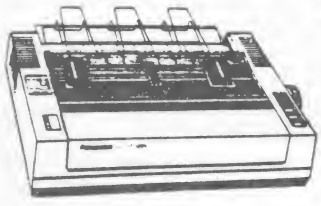

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ST Notes: Star NX-1000 Rainbow Printer

Review by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

How many times have you wanted to dump that graphics masterpiece on your screen to a printer...only in full color, not shades of grey! Some of you may have even bought a color printer to do just that, and then discovered that the printer lacks many of the features found on a "normal" printer.

Text output generally takes a back seat on most color printers, and the only answer was to either buy both types of printers, or to spend a small fortune on one that could handle both color and text equally well.

Not wanting two printers cluttering up my desk (and not able to afford a really *good* color printer), I stuck with my trusty Panasonic 1091i II which, by the way, I consider *the* best 9-pin printer around.

Then I saw an ad one day for the Star NX-1000 Rainbow (Not the Star NX-1000, which is a "normal" one color printer). The ad claimed the printer (9-pin dot matrix) had loads of built-in fonts, features, and even supported color! The list price was $319, but I found it for $239 at Microtyme (1-800-255-5835), so of course I *had* to get one. I figured that once I tried the printer out, I would sell either the 1091i or the NX-1000. Either way, I wouldn't be out much money.

The printer was delivered the next day in a small box. Pulling out the NX-1000, I noticed two things immediately. The printer was small (much smaller than the 1091i) and I couldn't see any tractor feed!

Thinking furiously, I couldn't remember whether I'd asked the dealer if it had one or not! Grabbing the manual, I started reading...and found that the tractor feed was located behind the platen, not on top of it. No more wasted sheets of paper!

Lifting off a plastic access panel on the back revealed the tractors, and I promptly loaded some paper. Since the paper feeds directly into the back of the printer, Star moved the parallel connector to the side of the printer. At last, someone heard my prayers! Running the self test, I was impressed with the quality (and quantity) of the NLQ fonts.

I had someone ask me which printed better, the Panasonic or the Star. The only response I could give was to tell him to look for himself. The fonts are different, so different people are going to prefer one or the other. They both form excellent NLQ letters, although I have to admit that I really like the Bold PS font on the Panasonic.

OK, let's take a quick look at some of the features that this little printer boasts, and then we'll cover some of them in more detail:

*144 cps draft / 36 cps NLQ
*7 color printing
*Friction and tractor feed
*Semi-automatic sheet loading
*8K data buffer
*Membrane control panel
*8 NLQ fonts built in
*4 pitch sizes
*Extra large characters
*Proportional print
*Emulates Epson LX-800 and IBM Proprinter II

Wait a minute, seven-color printing? How good is a graphics dump of a Degas picture going to look with only seven colors? The seven colors refers to the colors that you can directly access with a simple printer command.

Using the Epson JX80 printer driver (found in the Spring 1987 STart magazine), the printer will print over 400 different colors. Degas pictures dumped with this driver look very much like the original.

The printer prints the picture with three passes for each line, one pass for each of the primary colors. The ribbon used is a fabric ribbon that has four colors on it (yellow, red, blue, black), but the driver currently uses only three of these colors

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(mixing all three to obtain black). These color ribbons cost $9.00 each directly from Star. The printer will also accept the black ribbon used on the regular Star NX-1000, and these ribbons can be had for $6.00.

Currently, the only way to print Spectrum pictures, is to convert them to Degas and then print them. While Spectrum is displaying the picture, the screen dump routine is inoperative. So...I'm currently working on a program to read a Spectrum file from disk and send it to the NX-1000.

A big feature on this printer is the number of fonts that it has. In NLQ mode you can print in Courier, San Serif, Orator (with lowercase letters), or ORATOR (with small capitals for lowercase)). All of these NLQ fonts work with italics and/or proportional in any pitch (10, 12, 17, 20 cpi)! The printer also offers double height, double width AND quad height, quad width printing!

The feature I like best on the printer is the semi-automatic sheet feeder. Let's say you've got your form feed paper in, and all you want to do is address one envelope. Normally you'd pull out the form feed paper, print the envelope, then reload your paper.

With the NX-1000, all you do is select Paper Park from the front control panel, and the tractor feed will back your paper out from the platen. Now put the printer in friction mode and place your envelope in the feed slot, and presto! The envelope feeds in ready to be addressed.

When you're finished, simply unpark the paper from the control panel, and the tractor fed paper will load back in automatically! (By the way, this is the first printer that I've owned that prints on envelopes without smearing.)

Star has given the NX-1000 a generous 8K buffer (great for downloading!) and the membrane control panel lets you set a lot of the features easily. Star has also given us an easy way to set many of the features from within our favorite program. Using a simple command like "((C))1Test" will print the word test in red! Any time that the printer sees the double parens with a recognized code, it will set the feature!

Well, you're probably wondering which printer I kept by now. Suffice to say someone else is now enjoying my Panasonic.

The NX-1000 Rainbow does an excellent job as a standard text printer, but the added dimension of color really makes it a worth while investment!

My GEnie mailstop is L.VALLEY. Let me know what you like (or don't like) about my column. I really would appreciate some feedback. See you all next month.

Trailblazer from Mindscape

by The Unknown Demoer (CACE)

Hey gang, check it out! We have got a hot one for you -- Trailblazer! by Mindscape, Inc. As the package says, "The speed is terrific as you blaze down the trail of the hyperspatial color grid. Your opponent is left in a cloud of dust as you effortlessly leap over black holes, purple walls, blue bouncers and even the terrible cyan nasty zone. Oh No! You missed the edge! As you plummet into the blackness, you see your opponent streak by to the finish line. You limp on in, vowing to retake the lead in the next race!"

The game features "high speed action, graphics and sound that push your computer to the limit, split screen point of view play, 20 fixed courses and a random option, as well as five play modes plus a devilish computer opponent" says the back of the package.

Now what is in the package? A catalog of programs (ST owners fare better than 8bit by a margin of 2 to 1.), a registration card, an ad for a personalized story book for your child and the documentation for TrailBlazer. Really folks, this is a nifty game. Sound leaves a bit to be desired but all else is fast and fun. I like it.

[CACE note: Come to the meeting, Saturday, May 14th. This great game could be yours for only $2 immediately following the demo.]

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Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange the expensive 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessor, etc.). No soldering is required. Upgrade any ST to 2 or 4 MB with no trace cutting and no additional parts except for DRAMs. All boards are also available with an optional realtime clock, and all boards are tested for continuity. Populated boards are tested with chips installed.

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Learning Telecommunications Bit by Bit

By Jerry Cross

This month we will look at connecting your modem to your computer. I will center on how to design your modem cable and skip the lessons on actual construction. If you don't already know how to solder, you probably don't have a soldering iron or any of the supplies needed to make one yourself. (This might be a good subject for one of our tech people, huh guys?) If you plan to ask someone to make up a cable, you have to supply information on which pins to connect. This is commonly referred to as the "pinout."

First chore when connecting any type of hardware to your computer is figuring out how to interface it. "Interface" is defined as "the place at which independent systems meet and act on or communicate with each other." Computer manufacturers generally made it easy to connect hardware, such as printers and modems, by supplying a special port. Most computers come equipped with two of these ports. A parallel port is used to connect printers and a serial port for modems and other devices. I will discuss the difference between these ports in future articles, but for our discussion, we will focus on the serial port.

The information about each pin on your serial plug is usually supplied in the owner's manual of your computer or modem. Here is the information for both the ST and 8bit computer ports. Note the ST follows the Standard RS232C format, which is usually found on most modems. When hooking up an 8bit to one of these plugs, use the ST pinouts for your modem.

ST/RS232C 25 pin	8-BIT 9-Pin	
1-Grd	DTR	
2-Td	CD	(pins not listed
3-Rd	Td	or shown as
4-N/A	Rd	N/A are not
5-Cts	SG	needed with
6-DSR	DSR	modems)
7-SG	RTS	
8-CD	CTS	
9-N/A	N/A	
12-SI		
20-DTR		
22-RS		

Pretty simple, huh? Just match the pins from the RS232 to your 9-pin plug. Wait a sec! There is no SI pin on the 8bit plug, and where did that Grd pin come from! ACHK!! Now what do you do?

Welcome to the world of the RS232 "standard," folks! What do you do when you are missing certain pins on your computer (or modem)? You end up writing software around this problem or wire up special interfaces. This is why I emphasized buying 100 percent Hayes compatible modems. To better understand this, we have to take a close look at the RS232 Standard.

In the Beginning...

In 1962, computers were just becoming a fixture in the business world. Manufacturers looked to the future and saw problems developing. Each manufacturer thought its way of interfacing computers was better than the other. The computer industry was stuck figuring which protocol was best. What would happen if the public chose to accept type "A," or for the modem manufacturers, what if they chose to have equipment support type "B?"

This is now happening over the use of 9600 baud. Hayes has one type and U.S. Robotics has another. Another example is the VHS vs Beta video format wars. Lots of Beta users are now stuck with an unsupported system. The Electronic Industry Association developed the RS232 protocol to solve this problem. Each manufacturer follows certain standards, and, in theory, you could take any peripheral and connect it to any computer or even connect two computers together.

Over the years, certain manufacturers decided the EIA standard simply did not meet their needs and strayed from the standard. This makes it difficult connecting your devices unless you understand the different pins.

The RS232 Protocol

Let's list what each pin is and what it is designed to do. The "standard" RS232 plug usually has 25 pins (called a DB-25 connector). Generally, modems will only use 8 (or less) pins. The others are designed for peripherals such as printers and synchronous transmission devices. These have their own timing circuits and must be "tuned" with the other device. The other pins are needed for the clock timing. This is a bit advanced, but will be covered in later articles. Nearly all modems are asynchronous, meaning the timing information is encoded within the data as it is sent.

Pin	Label	Description
1	GRD	Protective Ground
2	TD	Transmit Data
3	RD	Receive Data
4	RTS	Request to Send
5	CTS	Clear to Send
6	DSR	Data Set Ready
7	SG	Signal Ground
8	CD	Carrier Detect
12	SI	Secondary Carrier Detect
20	DTR	Data Terminal Ready
22	RI	Ring Detect

The Protective Ground is a common electrical ground wire between the modem and computer -- usually the shielding around the cable. By connecting this pin (if your computer supports it), you can eliminate some of the outside interference that can trash your data. Transmit Data is the wire the computer uses to send data to another system.

Receive Data is the wire the computer uses for receiving data from another system. Request to Send is a control signal wire used by the computer to tell the modem it wants to send data. This is used along with the CTS pin. Clear to Send is the control signal wire used by the modem to tell the computer it is ready to receive the data the computer wants to send. This is activated only after receiving a Request to Send (RTS), and stays on until the data is transmitted.

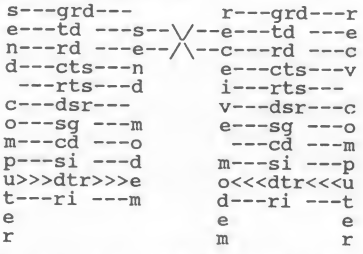
Data Set Ready is the control signal wire used by the

modem to tell the computer the modem is turned on and ready to go. Signal Ground is an electrical ground wire needed to complete the electrical circuit for the data transmit and receive pins. Carrier Detect is a control signal wire used by the modem to tell the computer a communications link is established between itself and another system.

Secondary Carrier Detect is supplemental to the carrier detect used by Hayes compatible modems to signal the computer the modem has detected a high speed carrier (1200 or 2400 baud). Data Terminal Ready is a control signal wire used by the computer to tell the modem it is on and ready to go. Ring Indicator signals the computer an incoming call has been detected.

Putting it all Together

The best way to describe how these pins operate (and why you need certain pins connected) is to show you how these pins are activated during the progress of making a call. Here is a diagram of what your modem looks like when the power is turned on.

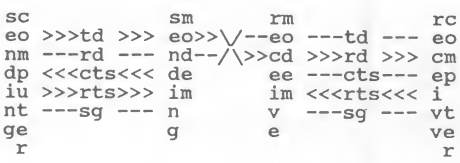


(The < and > characters show that the line has been activated, and the direction from where it was set). Note: There are two lines crossed between the send and receive modem. When you place a call through the phone company, these two lines are reversed. That way, data transmitted by the sending modem will arrive on the receive data pin of the receiving modem.

In it's simplest form, a modem will work with only 3 wires. Information is sent out over the transmit data (TD) and receive data (RD) pins. A ground must be supplied to complete the circuit.

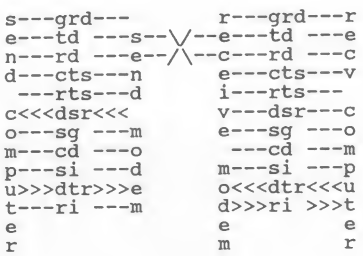
TD >>>> RD RD <<<< TD
GRD -- GRD

Simple, Huh? Well, there's a problem. If the first modem is sending out data and the second computer tried to send data, things go a bit out of whack. The sending modem can only do one thing at a time (send) and will miss the data coming in. It's like talking on the phone; you can't hear the other person if you are talking. When the modem wants to send data, it will activate the request to send (RTS) pin ("I want to send info"). The modem will detect this and respond by turning on the clear to send (CTS) pin ("OK, send your info"). Now, the computer has permission to transmit. The receiving computer, which does not have permission to send, must receive the information before its modem can send.



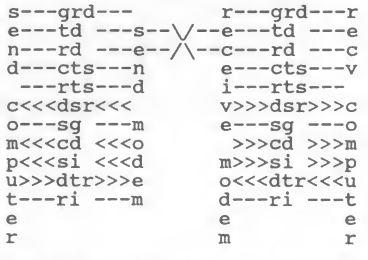
Note since the receive modem has not replied with a CTS, the receiving computer can not send any data. These five wires should be supported by nearly all modems and computers. As long as these are supported, you will be able to communicate with other systems.

So, what do all those other wires do? When you turn on your computer, a signal is sent through the Data Terminal Ready (DTR) pin to tell the modem it is ready to send data. When commanded to, the sending modem will pick up the phone line. When a dial tone is detected, the Data Set Ready pin (DSR) is activated. This tells the computer it is connected to the phone line. This is referred to as "off-hook." The sending modem begins dialing the number. The receiving modem will detect the ringing voltage and signals the Ring Indicator (RI) pin so the computer knows a call is coming in.



At this point, the receive modem has two options. If it is configured to auto-answer, it will pick up the line and attempt to connect with the sending modem. If it is not set to auto-answer, the modem will wait for a command from the computer to answer the phone. This option is dependant on the software you are using. If no carrier is detected within a specific time period, both modems will hang up and go to their original state.

When a connection is made, both modems will begin to search for the correct baud rate and establish a handshake. A "handshake" means the exchange of signals occurring after the modem answers. The link is complete and data can be sent and received. When both modems have correctly connected, the Carrier Detect (CD) pin will be activated to let the computer know a carrier has been detected and a communications link has been established.



Note: If you are transmitting at high speed (1200 or 2400) the ring indicator pin will also be activated. Once a connection has been made, all data will be transmitted over the RD and TD pins. By rapidly "flashing" these pins, the data will be transmitted much like Morse code. Data is sent in the form of binary numbers, (zeros and ones, off and on), which will be deciphered by the computer. I will cover this in future articles.

Ok, now that you understand a little about how the modem communicates with the computer, how can we put this information into practice? Last month, I

mentioned the Signalman Mark XII would not support the DSR pin. As you recall, this pin is activated by the receiving computer when it goes "off-hook" (picks up the phone). For a BBS, this tells the computer someone is on the line. The BBS software I was using constantly checked the status of this pin. If this pin activates, it then checks for a carrier by looking at the CD pin. But, since the modem did not support the DSR pin, the computer thought nobody called.

However, users were calling in OK and got a carrier because the modem was still doing it's job, but the BBS software would not activate. To cure this, I had to run a wire (called a jumper) between the DTR and DSR pins. I could trick the computer into thinking the DSR pin is on all of the time, since the DTR pin is activated while the computer is turn on.

The computer checks the Carrier detect pin and will find it active. It then continues to log on the caller. Another problem comes from the ChicagoLand Atari Club (CLAUG) newsletter. It seems a user was trying to connect his Avatec modem to the ST. He could only get limited use out of it, since he constantly got garbage over the line. It seems that Avatec's "Hayes Compatible" modem was not as compatible as they claimed. Avatec, for some strange reason, decided to have the data control pins located where the DSR/DTR pins are. With no way to control the direction of the data, both modems were in constant conflict. This caused garbled characters, and made it impossible to download programs. His solution was to run a jumper between the RTS and CTS pins on the computer side of the cable, and from the DSR to DTR pins on the modem. I'm not sure how this solved the problem (I don't have an Avatec manual) but it did work. Keep this in mind if you plan to use the Avatec.

OK, that's all there is to it. To make up your own cable, you will have to look in the modem's manual and locate which pins these command wires are connected to, then compare it to the computer's manual. Give this information to the person making the cable -- it should be easy to solder up one.

For ST users, the job is a bit easier (if you are using a Hayes compatible). Your computer already has a standard DB-25 connector on the back, which matches the plug on the modem. All you should have to do is purchase a simple modem cable. These can be picked up at most computer stores and swap meets for around $10. The Genesee Atari Group made a group purchase of cables for around $6 each recently!

Atari 8bit users have a harder time. The Atari connects to the P:R:Connection (or 850 Interface) plug, which is a DB-9 plug. This is not a standard cable and is rarely carried in computer stores. I recently did some shopping and none of the stores in Flint or Detroit had one in stock, but they said they would make one up for the usual $30 charge (if you could supply the pinout information).

If you don't mind waiting a few days, you can order an excellent cable from ICD Inc. for only $14.95. These are the folks who make the P:R:Connection. It's a good idea to order a modem cable when you order the interface. And while you are at it, order a printer cable too. They are even harder to find!

Next month we finish connecting our modem by showing you how to install your own phone line. It's quite simple, and will save you a bundle of money. See you next month!

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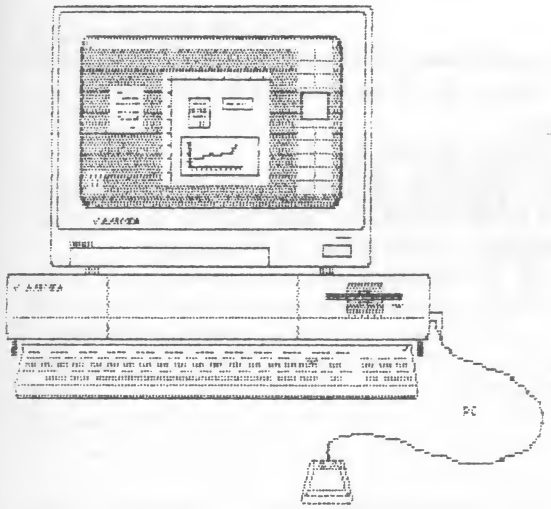

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Mark Williams C or Where Few Have Gone Before

By Richard Staff (GLASS)

Let me save you a lot of time right from the start. Do you really want to get the best C compiler available for the Atari ST? I unequivocally recommend Mark Williams C compiler (version 2 or higher) for users who want to get into the C language. Why do I feel this way? Because MWC provides a well documented and thorough C development environment. It even has full GEM AES/VDI documented support.

Dr. Jack Purdum (developer of the Eco-C88 C Compiler for IBM PC/XT/AT's) says that there are minimum features to look for in a C compiler. Let us see how well Mark Williams C (MWC) matches his list of minimum features.

First, the C compiler should provide for all data types and operators. In simple English, this means the compiler supports the Kernighan and Ritchie (aka, K&R) definition of the C language. A couple of the early C compilers for the Atari ST did not meet this minimum (GST C and Haba C). One of these early C compilers was so limited that I dubbed it the "ha ha C compiler." MWC is a complete ("full") Kernighan and Ritchie C.

Second, the C compiler should have some of the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) enhancements to the C language. ANSI has spent several years in committee meetings formalizing a definition for the C language that extends the K&R language definition. Although some changes are more important than others, Dr. Purdum feels that you should buy a compiler that has:

* enum and void data types (MWC vers. 2 does)
* structure passing and assignment (MWC does)
* function prototyping (MWC vers. 2 does not)

Dr. Purdum states that these enhancements to C make programming in C easier and more "bullet-proof" (i.e., less prone to mistakes) than a strict K&R compiler. Before ANSI there was UNIX. MWC has many UNIX function calls that are also part of its object libraries.

Third, the C compiler should be able to flag ("catch") syntax and semantic errors during compilation. Syntax errors are violations of the rules of the language itself. For example, leaving a semicolon off of the end of a statement, defining a variable twice, etc. Semantic errors are cases where the syntax is correct, but the context of the code is incorrect. For example, defining a variable as integer type and then later trying to use it as a pointer to an integer (which is wrong). Also, the compiler's error messages should print out in English, not some number you have to look up. MWC meets all!

Fourth, the C compiler should come with a rich collection of library functions. There should be good machine specific function library support in addition to ANSI library support. MWC does provide a full set of AES and VDI function libraries that allows a C programmer to manipulate the graphical environment of an Atari ST computer.

Fifth, the C compiler should provide an integrated development environment that facilitates the edit-compile-test cycle of C program development. Megamax C provides a GEM shell program that accomplishes this, while MWC provides a command line interpreter (CLI) called Microshell (msh) that accomplishes this in a less user-friendly way. I personally prefer a CLI for my C programming. MWC can be told to reload the source into the MicroEMACS (me) editor when an error is encountered during a compile (me will display the error messages in one window, while placing the cursor near the first error in the source in the other window).

Sixth, the C compiler should have "good" documentation. However, rating compiler documentation is a very personal thing. Basically, it should be long enough to cover each aspect of the compiler and how to use it, but be short enough to find things easily. An index and table of contents is a must. MWC version 2 has a reference manual that is 737 pages long, however the first 110 pages (chapters 1 thru 4) provide a tutorial introduction to MWC. The rest of the manual is an alphabetical listing of topics. It does have very well organized table of contents and indexes.

The above six criteria are the basic minimum that a C compiler should mostly meet before being considered for purchase. MWC compares favorably against these basic six. Dr. Jack Purdum suggests there are several additional features that you might want to look for. They are features that you may not use often, but are nice to have.

A C source code debugger (csd) can be indispensable when you have successfully compiled a C program, but can not get it to run the way you want it to. A csd would allow you to execute a program one line at a time (i.e., single-step) and examine values of variables along the way. Thus, a csd can save you hours of debugging time that normally would be spent in finding a small logic error. Mark Williams is coming out with a C source debugger as a separate support product.

A make facility is important to large C development applications. Such applications have many C source modules compiled and linked together to make a final system product. If changes are made to only a handful of the C source modules, issuing the "make" command would only compile those changed modules. This makes program development and maintenance of large systems easier to manage. MWC comes with a "make" program.

[Ed: This is the first in a series of articles dealing with Mark Williams C and Beckemeyer's MT-Cshell environment.]

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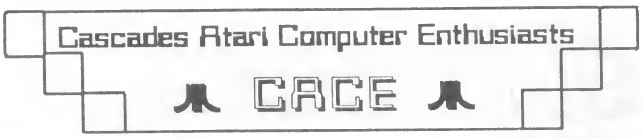

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Jim Boyce	522-4074
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1pm to approx. 4pm. The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson, MI.

Editorial Blather

Right off the top, I wish to thank Tim Hotchkiss, Ken Huhman and our worthy leader (and president) Brent Fisher for the enormous amount of help they provided in getting out the last newsletter. Thanks, fellas. You will never know how much it meant to me.

Folks, we had in the past a lot of people who contributed to the club in many ways and never received any recognition for their efforts. I discussed this matter with your board, and we agreed that time is long past. Starting in July, we will honor, in the newsletter and at the meeting, a person who gave to the club. A framed certificate will be given to the recipient at the July meeting. We will continue this practice until all people on our list are given the recognition they so richly deserve.

Now, it is time for your editor to feel embarrassed and to rectify his faux pas. Last month I announced two contests. The first contest was set up to get a name for the newsletter, complete with a closing date, rules and list of prizes. The second contest was to design a logo, also, complete with a closing date, rules and a list of prizes -- to my shame, it was asked of me -- logo for what? That is a reasonable question and I hope this is a reasonable answer. A logo for the club. So far, I have one entry -- from Ken Huhman. Come on folks, let's give Ken some competition! It's going to be tough because he has turned in a good entry. Jimmie Boyce

MAM Update by your roving reporter

Well folks, in checking out the roster of MAM subscribers, it seems we are a bit shy of numbers. For those of you still in the dark about what is going on with the Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM) as far as CACE is concerned, this is the scoop (don't you love that news talk?). The membership voted to become affiliated with MAM once again since it is under new management.

So what do you as a CACE member have to do to get your subscription converted over to MAM? Here is what the board decided and the membership approved. A certain portion of your annual dues is set aside for the newsletter. That portion, plus 35 cents, will get you one month of MAM. So take a look at when your dues expire (check your mailing label), calculate the number of months you have remaining on your membership and multiply it by .35 and that is what you need to get MAM delivered to your door. The books are open for subscriptions and dues from 1PM to 1:30PM on the day of the meeting; if that is not convenient for you, just send it to the CACE post office box address.

CACE Picnic

pic-nic (pik-nik) n. 1. an informal meal taken in the open air for pleasure. 2.(informal) something very agreeable or easily done. (pic-nicked,pic-nicking) to take part in a picnic. That is the word for today... can you say "picnic"? Good, I like that!

help (help) v. 2. to make it easier for (a person) to do something or for (a thing) to happen. 3.to do something for the benefit of (someone in need). help n. 1.the action of helping or being helped. help out, to give help (especially in a crisis).

That is the main word for the next few months... can you say "help"? Good, I need that! If you might have guessed, there is still plenty of room for people (you) on the picnic committee. Yours truly has assumed the position of chairperson, so all I need is your help on getting the picnic going and getting things together.

What I do need to know from everybody is when would you like to have your picnic; where do you want to have it; but, most importantly, if you'll be going to the picnic. You can call me at home, 787-3970. If I'm not there, leave a message on the tape machine. In the next few months, I'll be asking what you'll be wanting to drink, what passing dish you'll be bringing (so we won't have all pork'n'beans and no potato salad) and so forth.

To keep things legal, the definitions came from the Oxford American Dictionary, copyright 1980. Also if you have any ideas or suggestions, please call! Thanks Tony, from the local Commodore club, for your helpful suggestions and coming to see how us Atarians do things. See ya at the computer fair!

Craig Schaff

Survey Results

A couple of months ago, I sent out a survey with the newsletter. According to the results, 50 percent of the CACE membership is interested in Word Processing. (Hmmm, I wonder if the lazy one is having some impact?) Next were graphics and games. The second question concerned software demos at the club meetings. Amazingly enough, 50 percent of the members want "no answer" demoed. As soon as I get a copy it will be demoed, until then it will be the second choice, games.

The questions about hardware demos and computer or social projects for the club were met with 90 percent NO ANSWER. However, oddly, the club is willing to help 100 percent with club projects, demos and etc. A large project for those people is articles for the newsletter. The questions about the CACE picnic met with an enthusiastic YES. Oh yes, there was one vote against the picnic. So folks, that is how your board will attempt to serve you in the future.

Fishing Around

I'd like to start this column by thanking Tom Pritchard for all that he did for the club. He provided us with the meeting place at the Boo's Center, and was the newsletter editor for a bit, along with other contributions he gave to the club. Unfortunately for the club,

Tom's help and expertise is no longer available. Thanks for everything Tom, we appreciated your input and will miss it.

The next meeting will take place on Saturday, May 14, and will be held at the Boo's Center between 1 and approximately 4 pm. Please give me a call if you have any questions. This month we will have a demonstration of a new piece of software, Trailblazer, and we will then raffle it off at the end of the meeting. The raffle will be open to anyone present at the meeting. If you have any software or hardware you would like demonstrated, get in touch with either myself or with Jimmie Boyce.

Brent Fisher

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitle members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

The meetings take place at the MSU Physics- Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics--Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and appointed Officers of CHAOS

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
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16bit Rep	Brian Goluska	332-4415
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ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord	Mike Fildee	
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

Meeting Minutes

ST: The meeting began with the usual free-for-all discussion which focused heavily on the 'virus' situation. Chet Kapusinski demoed the program Gone Fishin' which is a fishing simulation game donated from Interstel, Corp. After the demo, the software was raffled off as a door prize. Next, two handouts were passed out. One was a ten-page listing of interesting and varied BBSes; the other was a cross-reference listing of ST articles in MAM. Doug Bell then did an excellent job of demoing the disk-of-the-month, which was assembled by Sally Nagy.

After the break, a video tape was shown featuring an interview with Bill Kelly of Computer Concepts, a relatively new software rental store. This was followed by commercial program demoes from Sally Nagy. Sally demoed Leatherneck, a war simulation, Treasure Hunt, an adventure game and she also demoed a maze-type game. Finally, Cuong Duong demoed Dark Castle, a graphics adventure/arcade game. Whew!

8bit: At the April CHAOS meeting, John Nagy started things off with demos of two commercial programs, Programmers Pal, an utility package, and MTOS, a multi-tasking operating system for 8bit Ataris. He also showed SuperDOS, a semi-commercial Austrailian product.

Then, two handouts were passed out. One was an interesting ten-page listing of various BBSes, and the other was a cross-reference listing of MAM ST articles. Next, John Nagy demoed another fine disk-of-the-month, which included a PD version of PrintShop. Finally, I demoed Jupiter:1999, a graphic adventure game which was loaned to us from Computer Concepts.

That's it for APRIL. Don't miss us in MAY! Remember, we may declare a Surprize Dividend meeting at any time, with FREE library disks for members in attendance!

Guy Hurt

President's Corner

Things are looking rosy for CHAOS right now. On the other hand, Atari Corporation is coming under increasing criticism. You can read the comments in the major Atari magazines and newsletters. As for CHAOS...our rental program is going great guns. The response, for the 8bit library especially, has been overwhelming. We are receiving orders from places as far away as the Phillipines. Special thanks to all of the librarians for their extra efforts.

A big welcome to Mike Fildee who has agreed to help out as ST SIG Coordinator. Doug Bell will be giving him a hand. They both need you ST owners to let them know what you have to demonstrate, or what you would like to see. Pitch in, and make it better for everyone. Thanks to all of you who loaned equipment or donated time for the MAXIT show last month. I hope all of you enjoyed it as much as I did.

In other news, at this writing I have received two issues of Analog. Glad to see them back. I also received a copy of the "new" Compute! Don't know where the subscription came from since I let mine lapse two years ago. Oh well, anything for free!

Leo Sell

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive (Near Atherton and Hammerburg ro.). During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday workshop at 9:30 a.m. Membership is $15 and includes a subscription to the Michigan Atari Magzine.

Meeting dates
May11 General meeting
June 8 General meeting
NO Saturday Session for May!
Information: Jerry Cross 313-736-4544
FACTS BBS 313-736-3920

President's Report

Not much to report this month. We finally received our subscriptions to Analog. It seems they lost the check I sent months ago, but things are back on track now.

Note that the May Saturday session is canceled because of the holidays. We are unable to get the school for that weekend.

GAG attended a couple of swap meets in April. Although we did not make a whole lot of money, we did get it across to those dealers that Atari is not dead, and we want some representation at these meets. If you would like to assist in manning a booth, contact Jerry Cross. It is not fair for the same people to give up their Sundays to watch over these booths, and I feel it's important for at least a token showing by the area clubs.

That's it; see you at the meeting.

Jerry Cross

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $20/yr..

President	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer	DaveBryant	
Librarian	Steven Buechler	
Archiver	Dave Oldenburg	
STChairman	Jim Zinke	
SysOp	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616)657-2665	

Through our 4th meeting of the year, and we managed to select a date for the GKAUG picnic and programming party. Looks to be Saturday, July 9th, beginning at 10 a.m. and lasting until "the Fat Lady" sings. More will be posted as we approach the date. I am sure you will want to bring something along to eat and perhaps a friend or two.

Alex made it back from his trip to Mexico with a couple of T-shirts and a little sun tan. He will be working on the BBS to straighten out the problems I introduced while he was away.

We had a demo of Lode Runner/Championship Loderunner and the Analog program from Issue #56 BBKART and the companion program to print out your pictures KOALAPRINT. They can be really nice if you want to print some pictures with text on them in various sizes and fonts.

We had an ST in this time. I like to see other members participate like this. Dave Bryant gave us a breakdown on the number of ST users (some 30) and the number that replied to our questionnaire (some 7). If the ST users want some "action," they have to get together. The club meeting is only a stepping stone to other meetings, so...you make the choice. Our 8bit users always seem to get something out of these meetings.

Next scheduled meeting is the Saturday, 14 May 1988 starting at 11:00am. We have Analog #59 now and will have the BBKART and KoalaPrint on our monthly disk if all goes well. We have a month to our next meeting so if you have any questions, we should be able to get them answered by then. Also, I purchased "The Newsroom" from Springboard. I will bring it for a demo. I really like it, and I can't even run it on my 1200XL because I don't have built in BASIC.

The extra drives should be available soon. I talked to Fred Farleigh and he has volunteered his time to getting the power supply together for the drives. He has gone to Amiga but he will still support the eightbitters. Thank You, Fred.

We didn't have time to get into the Adventure Creator maps, but we will try next time. No regular meetings are scheduled for July and August... The picnic in July will replace that regular meeting.

We will be providing a membership list for those people who request one (members only), and if you do not want your address or phone to be available for other members, please let Dave Bryant know (349-6063). We have found many of our members live close to each other and could access each other if they knew their numbers and addresses.

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS' — MICHIGAN'S Oldest 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

General meeting: First Thursday (every month) 6 p.m. until 9:00. Meeting at: Athens High School, Troy, MI., Room 1506, 4333 John R, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile Rd.)

Meeting topic for June....The Picture Show! All about graphic pictures and programs. How to change picture file formats and resolutions (to and from NeoChrome, Degas, EasyDraw, and pictures from other computers). Different slide-show programs. Different graphic drawing programs.

From the Desk of the President

My Favorite Software is...Okay aSTarians, I put a small challenge to you. Due to not being able to think of anything original to write this month I'm going to ask you to write something for me. Would you consider writing a paragraph or more, in your own words, what your favorite piece of software is and why? This could be about a game, word-processor, database, telecommunications, or shucks, most anything. You will not be graded (or de-graded), judged, or even rewarded but it would be interesting to see what some of the favorites are. You don't even have to sign your name. Please do include the name of the distributor and retail price. Don't worry about being professional. It really doesn't take much time and can be kind of fun. Also, it is fine if several people write about the same program. The following is my contribution.

My Favorite Software is Dungeon Master from FTL, makers of SunDog and other great games. I like DM because the graphics are great, the sounds are entertaining, and the game is very easy to play. Unlike text adventures. where you have to remember just what words to use (and how to use them) DM only needs you to point and click in the game action.

That's not to say that it is easy to solve though. It's been very addictive because it is so challenging. There is a lot of puzzle solving (of many different types) to be done to advance in the game. Being able to save and return at a later time keeps me from having to start over every time. And when I'm playing I don't want to stop because it's so enjoyable! I guess I have over 100 hours of playtime logged so far and still want to keep playing (even rather than writing this) late into the night. This is fantasy at its best. I even swap ideas and notes with other owners and players when I get stumped.

DM retails for $39.95 but can usually be found discounted for less. It's rumored that further adventures are planned using the characters that survive the dungeon. If this is true you can be sure I will also buy them.

There, that wasn't so hard. In fact it was kind of fun. Anyway, on with this article. Bob Garcia, we missed you last Thursday. But more importantly, you missed getting Universal File Selector for FREE! Yup, your name was drawn but you weren't here to claim. We still have software surprises up our sleeve for giveaways. Remember, our June meeting will feature telecommunications with Mike Gillie.

We are interested in receiving feedback, questions, or just mail in general. How do you like the 'in-house' Newsletter? Do you have any questions or problems with your hardware or software? Can you share any tips or tricks on using the Atari ST with us? Do you find the meetings interesting, educational, or fun? Please feel free to write letters to the editor (address below) and help him keep from feeling alone, poor guy!

We are adding a PASCAL Sig meeting night. If you are programming in Pascal and care to meet with others who are, then come to our regular meeting location (see above) on the 4th Thursday of the month and share your poblems, solutions and ideas with them. If you have any questions about it check in with the Cosmic STomper (BBS) at 313-547-0440, 300/1200/2400 baud in Royal Oak and leave a message to the Sysop or Byron Johnson.

See you next month!!!

Steve Mileski, president

Write to: G.L.A.S.S. (Great Lakes Atari ST Support)
P.O. Box 99737, Troy, Mich. 48099

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meeting: May 4, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael SW., 6:30 p.m.

George Nosky	President/Treasurer	(616)942-1527
2240 Parkridge Dr. SE. Grand Rapids, 49506.		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616)957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Member. Chairman	(616)784-6230

President's Comments

I want to take this opportunity to thank Chuck Baughman for filling in for me at the April meeting. We took advantage of our daughter's Spring Break and went on vacation. Thanks Chuck, I appreciate your efforts.

Charlene Bird, from Middleville, joined us at the April meeting. Welcome!

Chuck tells me that the News Station raffle was a big success. Congratulations go to Gerry Borysiak since he held the winning ticket. I bet Gerry puts it to good use making some fancy flyers for our Atari Fair. Looks like we will have more raffles in the future. If you have some suggestions for a raffle, please contact one of your officers or directors. Let's keep the price under $40.

The Atari Fair is firm for Saturday, May 14th at the Wyoming Public Library (address above). Time is from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. You should be reading this a few days before the Fair, so this is only a reminder. Gerry Borysiak and his committee have a fantastic day planned. Make sure you come out and support your club. Bring your friends!

Special invitation to fellow Atari enthusiasts in other user groups: Come out and see us. We would like to meet you! The following are some of the displays, demonstrations and attractions we will have for you: ST computer display, music demos, PrintShop/News Station demos, word processing/spreadsheet demos, education and communications displays, as well as the new XE game/computer system.

Public domain software will be on sale, and there will be refreshments and raffles throughout the day. See you there!

We have had a difficult time finding a meeting place to hold Steve Gilbert's BASIC seminar. As a result, we have decided to delay it until Fall.

I listed June 1st as the next meeting date. As you know, we will vote at the May meeting to determine if we will meet during the summer months. If you missed the May meeting, call up Steve Gilbert's BBS (616) 891-8740 to see how the members voted.

See you on May 14th at the Atari Fair.

George Nosky

M.A.C.E. Journal

1988 General Meeting
May 17
June 21
July 19
Aug. 16
Sept. 20
Oct. 18
Nov. 15
Dec. 20

All General meetings are held in Rm. 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10 1/2 Mile Rd and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. MACE can be contacted at P.O. Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037. Dues are $20 per family per year.

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine, a monthly magazine keeping them informed of what is new in MACE and the whole Atari community. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. These libraries are always growing and expanding, with the 8bit library at more than 400 disks and the ST near 200! Eight bit disks are $4 and ST disks are $5 each.

The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're

having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE members can and will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from our computing.

The ST sig meets currently on the first Tuesday of the month and there is a small admission charge to defray room rental costs. If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from one of the club's libraries.

President	Don Neff	(313)838-0077
Vice President	Jim Kennedy	(313)478-5531
Corresponding Sec'tary	Ted Newkumet	(313)835-4643
Recording Secretary	Mike Olin	(313)420-3301
Treasurer	Heather Neff	(313)838-0077
Journal Editor	Pattie Rayl	(313)973-8825
8bit Librarian	Kip Keifer	(313)288-1243
16bit Librarian	Paul Wheeler	(313)538-3649
Membership Chairman	Bill Rayl	(313)973-8825

MACE Board Numbers	SysOps
MACE WeST (313) 582-0657 (3/12/24)	Sharie Middlebrook
MACE East (313)978-8087 (3/12)	Mike Lechkun
College Board (313)478-9647 (3/12)	Jim Kennedy
Molin's Den (313)420-0407 (3/12)	Mike Olin
Treasure CheST (313)973-9137 (3/12/24)	Bill & Pattie Rayl

March Minutes

The March meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Tuesday, March 22, at the Southfield Civic Center. President Don Neff called the meeting to order at 7:45 pm by announcing the feature topic: Printer Graphics. Don also announced the April topic will be Home Productivity.

Don noted many members indicated an interest in receiving copies of MAM in the mail as opposed to waiting for the meeting night. Following a brief discussion, it was decided that the April issue will be mailed, and members will vote at the April meeting to decide if this procedure is to become permanent.

Heather Neff announced a "New MACE Logo" contest. The contest is open to any member; there is no limit to the number of submissions per member. Officers may submit entries but will not be eligible to win prizes as they will be judging. The name of the member should not appear anywhere in the artwork, nor should it be placed on the back. The finished artwork must clearly incorporate the full name of the club, but may play on the "MACE" abbreviation. Submitted entries should be no smaller than 3x5", no larger than 8x10" and must be done with black ink (only) on a white background (only). Artwork may be either free hand or computer generated graphics, but *must* be original. Submissions will be accepted via the club mailbox or may be presented to any officer before May 31, 1988.

The prize for the winning entry will be software and/or hardware to be valued at approximately $50, so it is important that the member include his/her preference (8bit or ST) on the back of the entry along with the valid membership number.

Don announced members who submit articles for publication in MAM will receive a coupon for a disk from either disk library. Suggested topics include software reviews (both pro and con), tricks and tips, game hints, etc. Articles may be submitted via modem to MACE WeST (582-0657) or directly to any officer at a meeting.

Ed Hanson, ST SIG Chairman, demonstrated some of the graphic features available on the ST using current versions of Degas and Neochrome and also displayed some pictures that had been dumped to a color printer.

Michael Clayton demonstrated his YEMACYB color printing program for the 8bit computers, then donated a copy to the club for raffle.

Member Paul Wheeler was presented with a MACE Certificate of Appreciation for his many years of distinguished service to the club. Paul has performed the duties of Membership Chairman for several years, and is now the ST Disk Librarian.

After a brief intermission, the 8bit SIG was treated to a tutorial on use of the Print Shop Labels program by Irene Church, and Don Neff then demonstrated the Print Shop Icon Shop and various other utilities available in the 8bit library.

The ST SIG reviewed the improved graphic capabilities of Spectrum 512.

April Minutes

The April meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Tuesday, April 19, at the Southfield Civic Center. President Don Neff called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, sadly announcing that member George Trittschler had died of a heart attack in early April. George, more commonly known to many as George Andrew, was actively involved as Sysop of the 8bit Sigs on MACE WeST and his absence has been a shock to many.

Don introduced Greg Kranich, one of the Sysops of the Atari Base BBSes in Sunnyvale. Greg noted that he is originally from Michigan, having moved to California about 7 years ago, and was home for a class reunion. Greg fielded questions from the audience about the happenings in Sunnyvale, trying very hard not to release unofficial comments about future software/hardware systems to the relief of many who are tired of vaporware. Many thanks to Greg for visiting!

The feature topic of the meeting was Home Productivity and there were demonstrations of spread sheets and databases. Paul Wheeler demonstrated an Analog program called "MicroCheck" by Clayton Walnum, a BASIC program for the 8bit machines. Bob Retelle demonstrated a program called "Portfolio Manager," which he ported to the Atari from a program that was originally written for "that other computer."

The MACE Appreciation Award was presented to member Bill Kane for his efforts to help with the menial and mundane tasks of operating the club. Bill has contributed a great deal of time to setting up the room and distributing the Journals.

Don again requested that members contribute articles for printing in the Journal.

In the 8bit SIG meeting, Don demonstrated a variety of programs from the club library fitting to the Home Productivity topic. Cassette and disk label makers, loan analyzers, weather prediction systems, trip calculators and project planners were among the fare.

The ST SIG meeting flopped because persons who brought hardware neglected to bring the connecting cables. Shame be upon you for 40 days and 40 nights!
The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 17, when we will be celebrating another MACE Birthday meeting.

There will be special guest speakers along with door prizes and goodies to stuff in our faces. The second half of the meeting will be a Swap Meet. Members may bring their used hardware and software to sell, barter or trade. You must be a member in good standing to acquire table space.

Michael Olin

From the MACE President

Headache #69, Part II

Deja Vu: Just before the March meeting, a couple of people who were scheduled to do presentations said they could not make it to the meeting. They promised to give their demos at a future meeting though.

Headache #69, Part III

Several people standing at the back of the room spent the evening talking loudly to one another. Talking so loudly in fact, they drowned out the voices of the speakers who were using microphones! Some members of the audience went home early in disgust because they couldn't hear the excellent presentations. If you come to the MACE meeting to socialize, please go into the lobby to do it. There are many areas in the building for you to go if you want to talk with your friends. There is only one area where we can hold our meeting and give our presentations - the same room you've been so rudely talking in. You talkers can move, we can't. If you are one of the talkers, please use the lobby instead. If you are one of the audience members who is being disturbed by the talkers, tell THEM, not me.

Analog Magazine

ST-Log and Analog showed up in my mailbox again. It's nice to have them back, but I don't care for the glossy paper they are printed on now. That paper may be great for Larry's other magazines which have a heavy photo content, but it's hard to read text on it; the light reflects off the pages. Actually, I'd be glad to have Analog on any paper, just as long as I receive it. By the way, does the "LFP" at the bottom of the table of contents page stand for "Larry's Fine Photos"?

Lee Pappas of Analog said they will extend our subscriptions by three months to make up for the past inconvenience to us. That's fine fellows, but what about the 1987 summer issues we paid for but never received from you? Why don't you extend our subscriptions enough to replace them?

Remember Analog's previous excuse of nondelivery because they were having problems with the printer? (He wanted to be paid for his services perhaps?) Analog has replaced that with a new excuse. Lee told me the subscription service they had hired screwed up the delivery of those issues so it's not Analog's fault. Uh, Lee, you hired them, we didn't. Why didn't Michael Des Chenes fire them when they screwed up the first delivery? (Or the second, or the third, or...)

Why should we innocent subscribers pay for Mike's weak business management practices? I still recommend subscribers don't renew their Analog subscriptions until they receive everything they paid for in 1987.

Special Members

I had the pleasure of presenting a "MACE Appreciation Award" at the March meeting. These awards are for members who have quietly but continually put in a lot of work to keep our club going, usually without any thanks from anyone. April's award was given to Paul Wheeler, the ST SIG Librarian, for his many years of service to MACE. Paul has been involved in almost every club activity for many years and has also been a club officer for most of those years. In fact, I think Paul has been an officer longer than any other member of MACE. Thanks from all of us Paul.

Paul said he has already received several other awards from MACE. I forgot to mention it Paul, but this award is special because it includes an expense-paid weekend trip for one to beautiful Zug Island. The AAA Travel Bureau has mapped the scenic route through Delray for you.

Meeting Themes

Our March meeting was Printer Graphics night. Mike taught us how to make color prints on any Epson printer. Irene showed us how to make graphic labels with Print shop icons and different fonts. George gave a thorough demostration of DiskIO Plus. We demonstrated a few of the Graphics and Print Shop utilities from the MACE library and concluded with a "tonight only" sale on all the Print Shop and Graphics utility disks.

April's meeting will cover Home Productivity programs such as: disk labels, mailing labels, mortgage amortization and easy data bases. We'll be having a another "tonight only" sale on several special disks including a nice data base program.

May, of course, is the MACE Birthday party (it's our 8th birthday!). The theme will be food, fun and socializing. Also, due to your many request, we'll be holding a computer swap that night too. Bring your extra computer equipment and take home some cash. Better still, bring your extra cash and take home my computer equipment.

June's theme will be Word Processing and will feature demos of the more popular word processors and spelling checkers. The special MACE library "tonight only" sale will include a word processor with a spell checker!

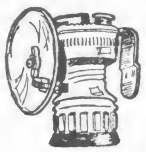
As always, your questions about any Atari subject will be welcomed at any meeting even if the question doesn't pertain to that night's theme. MACE wants to help you make your Atari more useful and enjoyable for you. May the DOS be with you.

Don Neff

But the box looked so good!

The package promised so much.
The program delivered so little.
Be sure the programs you buy
are worthy of your ST.

Underground



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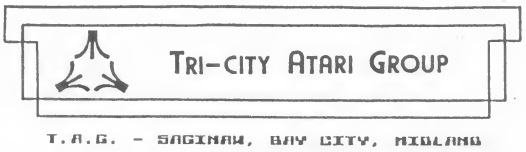

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: May 14, June 11,1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Neil Demo	ST Disk Lib.	

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bit and the ST and access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 140 disks in the 8bit library and 40 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks *at no charge* if you bring your own disk to copy on at the meeting. If you don't have a disk, you can get 8bit disks for $1.00 and ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now!

Hot Flashes from the Future!

The month is May; spring is arriving, and everything is in bloom. To commemorate all of this beauty, TAG is having a meeting dedicated to beauty and imagination. This month, we'll be featuring programs designed to unleash your artistic side.

On the ST side, Al Jennings will be demoing Spectrum 512, a paint program that allows you to use 512 colors simultaneously! And going one step beyond that, Neil Demo (perfect last name!) will demo the latest in paint programs, Quantum Paint, a program that features the ability to display 4096 colors at once!

Not to be outdone, the eightbitters are demoing several of their own paint programs. Ted Beauchamp will be demoing BBK Artist, an art program from our public domain library, and Nelson Greene will be showing Rembrandt, an impressive program from Antic! There will be raffles for the 8bits, so show up and try to win!

Relics to Relish

The meeting started with a discussion of how to get some of the ex-members back into the fold. Char Davis proposed we send out a survey to all ex-members to find out why they stopped coming, and what would bring them back. It was agreed this was a good idea, so Char is now preparing the survey, and will take care of tabulating the results.

TAG recently purchased 6 programs and 2 books for the 8bits and these items will be shown and raffled during the coming months. Be on hand to see what they are and try to win them! It was also agreed LeRoy Valley would place an ad in the paper to attract new members.

Moving into the demo's, LeRoy Valley demoed Label Master Elite for the ST. This slick little program incorporates a simple database to handle names and addresses (and you can sort on any field) and has the ability to add Print Master icons to any of the labels! It also prints disk labels, but there appears to be a bug in the program for this feature. If you print a disk label that uses a PM design, the program only prints 4" form length. Selecting 2" or 3" does not change the form length! Overall though, the program does do a nice job, and you can even vary the size of lettering for each line! Not a bad program for $27.00.

LeRoy also showed off several programs he has written. The first was a player program for Digisound ST files. The program is available in both .PRG and .ACC versions, and utilizes a GEM file selector box for selecting the file you want to play. The other program was a desktop accessory to set up a myriad of features for the Star NX-1000 Rainbow printer. The accessory allows you to select any font, any pitch, and 7 of the printers colors. It also lets you do form feeds, set tabs, set margins, and skip perforations! LeRoy also had his new printer there. If you want to know more about this new color printer, read the review in ST Notes.

On the 8bit side, Char Davis demoed Super Dos, a new DOS with a lot of nice features. Besides being the smallest (memory wise) DOS around, it appears to be the most feature-packed. It's got all of the standard features of Atari DOS, plus it handles true double density drives, lets you create menus to automatically run Basic and Binary files and a whole host of other features. We'll be raffling this program off at the May meeting so show up!

After the demo, the eightbitters held their own meeting and agreed to try something new. Char is now heading up the new project to design and build an adventure game. Next meeting will feature the designing of the basic scenario for the game, and each member of the group will be in charge of some facet of the game -- whether it's creating a story line or programming, join this group and you'll have fun!

The meeting ended with everybody oooing and ahing over the NX-1000 Rainbow printer. Quite often I heard the question "Is this a 24-pin printer?"

The President Speaks Out

This month's attendance was improved, and the crowd seemed more enthusiastic than usual. Must be something in the air this time of year! Looking at the list of officers, you'll find a new name under ST disk librarian. We have had our share of problems finding someone with the time and energy to devote to this job, and I can only wish Neil good luck!

Elections are coming up next month, so if you want to run for one of the offices, be prepared to volunteer (or to be nominated). I would like to add the office of 8bit Organizer to our club. This person would be responsible for organizing the 8bit portion of the meeting, and also for supplying me with the 8bit meeting minutes. Think about it, and I'll see you all the next meeting!

LeRoy Valley

8bit Equipment Volunteers

Nelson Greene	Disk Drive, Monitor, Computer

ST Equipment Volunteers

Neil Demo	520ST & disk drive
Bryant Lafreniere	Monitor

Once again, a big Thanks to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. *Please,* if you're going to be late, or can't make it, *call!!* It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

How to Join WAUG!

Come to a meeting! WAUG meets on the second Tuesday of each month from 7 to 10 p.m. State Street Computer in Ann Arbor will host the next meeting. State Street Computer is located at 334 S. State Street, between N. University and E. Williams Streets, near the Nickels Arcade. There is an exit for State St. off of I-94, or take US-23 to Washtenaw, then Washtenaw to N. University. Please bring a chair or two.

If you wish to join WAUG! by mail, please send a check or money order for $15 made out to Bob Carlini to: 15420 Maxwell. Plymouth, MI, 48170.

Members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine, and also have access to the 8bit and ST disk libraries. These disks are jam-packed with useful and entertaining public domain software. Members pay the special price of $2 for 8bit and $3 for ST disks, and disks may be purchased in person or by mail.

President	Mike Olin	(313)420-3301
Vice President	Pattie Snyder-Rayl	(313)973-8825
Treasurer	Bob Carlini	(313)261-7609
Secretary	Craig Harvey	(313)996-0940
Newslett'r Ed'r	Bill Rayl	(313)973-8825
8bit Librarian	Mike Pieronek	(313)482-4108
ST Librarian	Bruce Urbanski	(313)451-0483

General Meeting 4/12/88

Music & MIDI were the topics for this meeting, and we were treated to a wonderful display of some of the things one can do with an Atari, MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) and a synthesizer. Rick Schrader first showed a program called Virtuoso for the 8bit, which provides a way to display shapes and colors on your screen combined with music. Then using his 8bit MIDI interface connected up to a synthesizer, he demoed a few songs converted from AMS to MIDI, which allowed them to be spruced up quite a bit.

For the ST, Rick showed a sequencer (hope I got the terms right) called Midisoft, which retails for around $99. This allows things like recording new tracks on top of old ones while listening to the old ones. Using Music Studio, Rick also showed a little about how you can create your own instrument with these programs. This was carried further by Brian Hall who demoed a public domain 'patch generator' that you can use to randomly alter various parameters to create instruments previously unknown to mankind. Just let it go, and then throw out the sounds that don't appeal to you! Brian also pointed out that the MIDI ports on the ST don't have to be used for music -- they work fine as high speed ports for other uses, as in the game MIDI Maze.

Apparently, the ST is being heavily advertised in electronic music magazines, and there is a good bit of PD software being generated for this use of the machine.

Business

The membership voted to add July and August to the club schedule and to increase dues to $15 per year to cover additional magazine costs and keep the club solvent. This means that all $10 memberships scheduled to expire after June '88 will now expire two months earlier, so watch your MAM mailing label closely for notice of your expiration date.

Also, since a few members are not receiving their MAM's before the meeting, you now may elect to pick up your MAM at the meeting rather than having it mailed. However, you can't switch back and forth each month, and if you say not to mail it and you don't show up at the meeting, it will not be mailed at all due to the much higher cost of first class compared to bulk mail.

Starting with the May meeting, WAUG's meeting location will be at State Street Computer, at 334 S. State Street, Ann Arbor. This is located on the west side of State St., just south of Nickel's Arcade and North University St., and north of William St. The topic of the May meeting will be 'Hack & Slash' which will include such things as use of a sector editor and possibly some hardware modifications.

Craig Harvey

From The Prez...

I would like to give special thanks to Rick Schrader and Brian Hall for their work above and beyond the call of duty at the April Music Meeting. You guys make it look so easy, and I don't think I've ever heard such sounds before! I think most of the persons in attendance will agree that it was not only entertaining but also quite informative, and I enjoyed your enthusiasm.

The May meeting is going to be a "catch-all" night. I expect there will be a little something for everybody when we "Hack & Slash" our way through our Ataris. Newcomers to the computer world should find a lot of good information being bandied about, and the intermediate and expert users should also be able to pick up a trick or two while we discuss sector editors, hardware upgrades and the like.

I was pleased to see the amount of interest in holding year 'round meetings! I was expecting the general consensus would go along with the suggestion, but did not expect such an overwhelming positive vote. There are a lot of great suggestions for meeting topics which will be a big help to the new officers when their time comes, and it's good that the suggestions came from the members themselves. I think it is absolutely vital to the future of this club that the members stay involved in the planning processes.

That, of course, leads up to one last pitch about running for elected office. In the June meeting, we will be holding elections and I implore each of you to think about the possible contribution you could make toward keeping this club strong. The duties are not terribly difficult and 12 months is not an eternity. Copies of the Charter will be made available at the May meeting, where you can find the job descriptions for each office.

Michael Olin

P.S. If you want to hear more of Brian's MIDI capability, stop in at SchoolKids Records in Ann Arbor and pick up a copy of Shock Therapy's new album, "My Unshakable Belief."

Atari Announces Another Computer

Courtesy of the Los Angeles ACE, April Issue

[Editors' Note: This article will soothe all the aches you may have gotten in the struggle to do this year's tax forms!]

Atari Corp., Sunnyvale, CA, has announced another computer in their successful line of ST computers. This computer, model 1040EZ, dubbed the Collector, has several added features not found on any other computer.

The case design is a cross between Atari's popular 1040ST and the new Mega released in December, 1987. The base unit looks identical to the Mega unit except the keyboard is attached at a 60 degree angle from the rear corner of the unit. This feature was added to provide easier access to the mouse port.

The 1040EZ was said to be designed for those individuals that make less than $15,000 a year and have no major investments.

Major changes from the previous STs:

- Reduced Costs: The new cost structure has been reduced and the cost tables have been simplified.
- New rules for children: The 1040EZ will not allow games to be run if there are no children in your household.
- Age 65 or over or blind: The use of an interface A is required if the user is over theage of 65 or blind.
- Social Security Number: The 1040EZ now requires children to enter their social security number before using the computer.

Several options will be available for the 1040EZ soon. Here is a list:

- Manual B--fully explains use of User's Manual
- Option A--needed to use any other option
- Option C--Used if computer is used in a business
- Option D--Needed if you have lots of money (Atari wants some of it)
- Option 2210--used if you didn't pay enough for your other computer
- Option 3903--if you are going to move your computer
- Option 4684--if you injure yourself with your computer.

There are several manuals available from Atari. The following publications can be ordered from Atari, or you can read or photocopy them at many participating libraries.

- Manual 17: Your Atari Computer
- Manual 54: Computer guide for US citizens and resident aliens abroad
- Manual 334: Computer guide for Small Business
- Manual 503: Child and Dependent Computer Guide
- Manual 523: Selling your house for a computer
- Manual 529: Sending us more money
- Manual 910: User Group listings
- Manual 929: Computer Rules for children and dependents

And many more....

Several sources have reviewed the new 1040EZ and all the documents available and have several different opinions.

LA Times: It's the best thing since sliced bread, but I don't like the 1040EZ with butter and milk.

Micro Times: After long hours and sore eyes, we have come to the opinion that we need to spend more time and effort to produce a better mouse trap and have no business eating prunes.

Byte: After using the 1040EZ for several years, we have come to the conclusion that we have not vet seen this computer.

Professor Wobblybottom (MIT, PhD, CCE, ALW): From a strictly 'professional' point of view, I would have to say yes, but don't quote me on this. This is off the record, right?

Xxxxx Xxxxx(unnamed person at Atari): After several months working on the 1040EZ, I feel I have a true understanding of just what it is that this question means to all of you in respect to the announcement of this system that you are asking for my opinion about and for that I am giving you this answer.

Editor: I too have used this new 1040EZ and find it very easy to use. I also feel you should consider getting two of them, saving one for personal use only.

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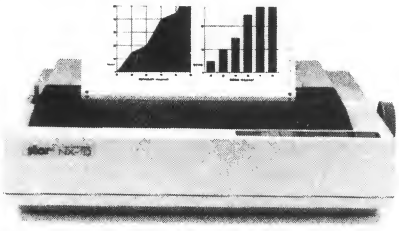

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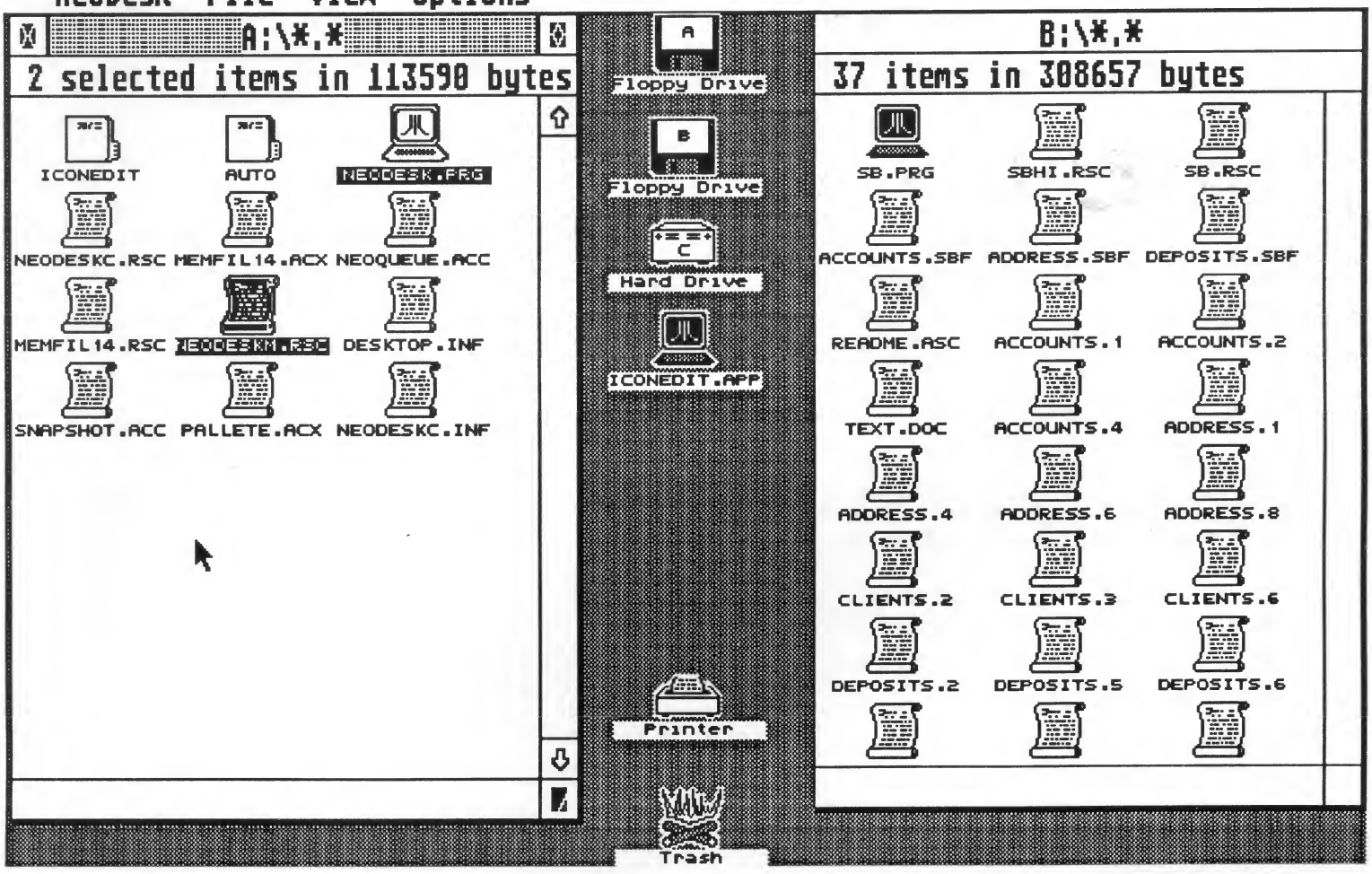
Your Atari Interface

Vol. 3 No. 6
June 1988

NeoDesk: The Alternative ST Desktop



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MAM this Month

Features

From the Reader's Viewpoint	2
Atari News and Comment	3
Editorial Ramblings	6
Teasers! A Look at Support for Atari 8bit	7
GFA Basic Quick Reference Guide (ST)	8
Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 (ST)	9
Take ACTION! with Your Programming	10
Super 8bit Graphics	10
64K Upgrade for Your 600XL	11
Rogue, an Epyx Adventure	13
Flying the ST	14
1ST Word Plus	17
Learning to Live with Your ST	18
Stanley and Knob	22
Universal Item Selector 2.0	23
NeoDesk -- The Alternative Desktop	24
Last Hacks	32

Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	27
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	27
GAG	(Flint, MI)	27
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	28
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	29
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	30
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	30
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	31
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	31

Advertisers

United Computer	4
Mars Merchandising	9
ST Informer	13
Soft House Computer Center	16
Alpha Systems	17
Terrific Corp.	20
Omega Soft	22
State Street Computer	23
Iliad Software, Inc.	23
Tech Specialities	26
Word Perfect Corporation	Inside Front Cover
Computer Success	Inside Back Cover
Migraph, Inc.	Back Cover

Volume 3, No. 6 June 1988

From the Reader's Viewpoint

Review of a Review -- by Anon.
Dear Editor, MAM

I can keep my piece no longer. I must right in deference to Gordon T. Totty's deliterate ravens on the subject of "Strip Poker," one of my favorite things. So, he wanted to "oggle" the girls, did he? Ha! According to my "American Heritage Dictionery of the English Language," *ogle* means "to stare at impertinently, flirtatiously, or amorously." I think that's what the fathead tried to spell, don't you? So, what does "oggle" mean? I'll tell you, when he oggles he boggles my mind! (Double HA!)

Passed the way he batches up the Kink's English, I must also rigorously inject to his comments on the appearance of the gals. If he had ever seen a *reel* woman, even if only in the movies, he would depreciate the art worx more. I am a part-time professional gynecologist and, I insure you, each of these mammies has acute angina.

I don't know why you print this jerk's stuff; he obviously doesn't know wherefore he speaks. Who does he think he is to make fun of the dean of textual philology, Hew Hefner, just because Hew likes a robe and pipe? I'll bet Totty thinks he slipped this buy me, but I caught it right away! We are talking hereabout an American destitution. Hef, as we call him, has appeared on TV. More than once, two! Not only that, but a junior college in California has used the Playboy Textual Philology as the bases for a coarse in intra-personal dyanics.

Other than the peace by that Totty potty mouth, you have a fine magazine. Keep up the good work, but dump him if you please. I'd like to see more articles on basic programming in machine language. Let's get back to our routes!

Just print my initials because I am intimidatedly familial with you-know-who as we are both from MACE. I wouldn't want to have to herd his feelings. Just sine me,

Malapropriately yours,
gtt

P.S. My wife reads his stuff and degrees with me, but didn't want to cosine. She's very demur.

Dear Reader,
Your letter is one of the more interesting we have received lately, and so we reprint it here in all of its mind-boggling detail. While we appreciate your desire to criticize Totty, we must confess that in the matter of the misspelled "ogle" he is blameless. The copy he submitted to us included the correct spelling; a gremlin in the editing or printing process must have added the extra "g."

As for the rest of your comments, of course we agree wholeheartedly with you. A concerned and active reader like yourself is unvaluable to the magazine and the rest of our audience. We do, however, note an occasional error in your letter. In the interest of making sure all of our readers fully understand what we think you meant, we have listed your words and our translations or other comments below, in the same order as the words appear in your letter:

piece ... We think it is your peace that you are no longer holding. We hope it is your peace, in any event.

right ... Write, right? Right!

deference ... Reference; don't be so humble.

deliterate ravens ... Illiterate ravings? You should be an expert on this!

Dictionery ... Dictionary. Spell checkers are very reasonable now; everyone should have one.

fathead ... Idiot, but a rose by any other name...

We did notice the degree to which your mind is boggled. If you can prove that Totty's article did it, you should contact a good attorney and sue him, but not us.

passed ... Past, we expect, but we are almost past caring.

batches ... Botches. There are a batch of botches in your letter!

Kink's ... King's, unless you know more about the King than we ever did.

rigorously inject ... Vigorously object? Your version is a bit more colorful.

reel woman (in the movies) ... You can be shot for puns like that!

depreciate the art worx ... Actually, that's just what he did with this software from ArtWorx.

insure ... Assure, or are you an insurance salesman when you are not practicing gynecology?

mammies ... No comment, not even with a ten foot pole...

acute angina ... How tragic! Let's start a fund.

jerk ... Idiot savant.

wherefore ... Why art thou Romeo? Perhaps you are right; the nine letter version of "why" packs more pizazz.

textual philology ... Could this be code for Sexual Philosophy, or an obscure reference to the study of language? Cards and letters welcome.

Hew ... Who?

buy me ... Never in a million years!

hereabout ... Whereabout?

destitution ... Well, on second thought, you may be right.

on TV ... two ... WOW! WOW!

bases ... Basis, unless you had something baser in mind.

coarse ... We bet it was!

dyanics ... Get out of here; this one isn't even in the dictionary yet.

peace ... No, piece, or is it peas? Now we are getting confused, to.

potty mouth ... Amen.

programming in machine language...Did you used to wire boards? Still do?

routes ... Actually, we think we should get back to our roots, but we forgot the route. Besides, the Atari 400 with the membrane keyboard is gone. You know, they say you can never go home.

intimidatedly ... Don't be afraid of Totty. We have seen him and he is just a squirt. We hope you did not mean "intimately", as we don't want any of that going on around here.

familial ... Say, are you related to him?

herd ... Has that many feelings, does he?

sine ... OK, joker, what's your angle here?

malapropriately ... Never mind. Nothing we could add would rival this.

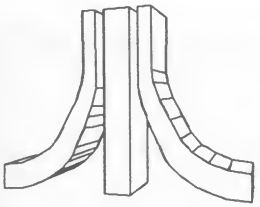
gtt ... An obvious alias!

degrees ... You and your wife went to the same school together?

cosine ... What's HER angle?

demur ... Are you a lawyer? One more letter from you and we'll demur!

Your Patient Editor
Next patient, please.



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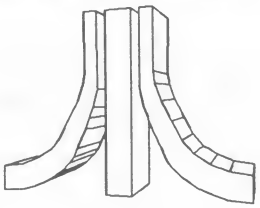

News Analysis by Bill Rayl

The approach of summer seems to be heating up the Atari community and news abounds this month.

Atari Corp. has gone through a massive reorganization with the creation of a separate computer division company called "Atari Computer." The division is headed by Chuck Babbitt who had served as a marketing consultant to "several high-tech startups," and was a Vice President at Aston-Tate in the early 80's, according to Atari's Neil Harris. Atari Computer has also appointed Tony Gould as Vice President of Sales. Gould spent 10 years in sales with IBM and worked for Intelli-Design just prior to coming to Atari.

With the new company organization has come some promising signs. Atari has stopped using distributors and is now hiring Atari-employed sales representatives in an attempt to strengthen dealer ties. A newsletter specifically designed for dealers is now being produced and a telemarketing group has been added at the Sunnyvale headquarters.

The company has also added the public relations help of Winston and Winston, reported to have some expertise in the computer field with a background in Tandy, and plans for hiring an Advertising agency are in the works. Babbitt has reportedly stated that ST ads will be appearing soon on Cable TV only -- this has not been verified. There is not much specific info getting out, due to a corporate order that specifics not be leaked to the press during the two-month period Babbitt has been given to form a new corporate strategy and get the ball rolling.

Other promising signs from Atari affect both ST and 8bit owners. On the ST side, a new set of ROMs will be shipping in the fall -- of this year! The ROMs will contain some major changes and improvements, will cost around $50 and will be shipped with Blitter chips. [Ed: We will keep you updated on the ROMs and will let you know when they "hit the street."] It has also been reported Atari will begin shipping 520STfm units with double-sided drives by year's end. No word as yet concerning (inexpensive) upgrades from Atari for current single-sided drive owners.

For the 8bit Atarians, XF551s are becoming more readily available, and Atari is reported to have a large stock of them due to increased production to meet demand. AtariWriter Plus 80 is nearing shipment -- I know, we've heard it before, but a pre-release version was made available to the San Leandro, CA, Atari group at the West Coast Computer Faire, and reports from Atari indicate that the rest of us will see it soon too! The light pistol will also be available "in the near future," according to John Skruch, Atari's director of software development. The gun will be sold separately in the toy stores and packaged with a Bug Hunt cartridge for computer store distribution.

From all outward appearances, Atari is committing to a policy of renewed support for both dealers and end-users. Let's hope the signs aren't leading us to a dead end.

Atari isn't the only one releasing promising news for the 8bit – Merrill Ward and Associates, Inc. has announced they will release an ST-like desktop program to give Atari 8bit owners what GEOS has give to Commodore 64ers. Appropriately named "Graphic Operating Environment" (GOE), the system will allow interface via joystick, keyboard or an ST mouse plugged into joystick port 1. GOE will be sold as a "super cartridge" that will include a drawing program, word processor, printer drivers, fonts and an icon editor (as well as the operating system, of course!).

Current plans are to sell the cartridge for between $50 to $60, and Merrill Ward is reportedly in negotiations with Atari for future bundling of GOE with the XE machines. If this all sounds interesting and you want to see more, you can get a demo version of GOE by sending $5 to Merrill Ward & Associates, 255 N. El Cielo Rd, Suite 222, Palm Springs, CA 92262. Anticipated shipping date for the cartridge is by the end of July, and the $5 for the demo will be applied toward the purchase price if you decide to buy!

We've recently heard a lot about SpringBoard's release (finally!) of NewsRoom for the 8bit Atari, but Springboard may have some stiff competition in News Station from Reeve Software ($29.95, 48K disk). News Station allows use of any available Atari font in 64 different font sizes, and allows use of PrintShop icons, Micro-Painter and Micro Illustrator pictures and direct drawings from within News Station to be added to your text. When, purchased with the new News Station Companion ($29.95, 48K disk), multi-page text files and unconverted Koala Pad graphics can be accepted and "banner" headlines can be added.

Total cost of the News Station package is $10 more than NewsRoom, but with far more flexible font and graphic importation abilities. For more information on News Station and its Companion, contact Reeve Software, 29 W. 150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville, IL 60555 (312)393-2317.

In the 8bit PD/shareware market, a new term-

mat program called De-Term 850 is making a big splash. One of the most talked about features is the built-in mini-version of Breakout, which can be played while *simultaneously* uploading or downloading. The program also has a windowing system "similar to the ST" and allows optional use of a LIST.BAT and MODEM.BAT batch file for loading phone lists from disk or sending commands to your modem at startup.

Currently, De-Term only supports Hayes compatible modems connected to the 8bit via 850 interface, ICD P:R:Connection, etc. The author, James Dillon, has not to our knowledge made any plans for releasing versions for other modems. Perhaps if enough people send in contributions for his software effort...!

How many of you remember the ATR8000? Those of you who do, remember you could add IBM 5-1/4" and 8" drives (and now 3-1/2" too!) in any available densities and that the ATR8000 came with standard Centronics parallel printer port and RS232 modem port. On top of that, the ATR8000 could give your Atari full CP/M compatibility, and one more step up the ladder, this baby gave 8bit Atarians 16bit microprocessing power with CP/M-86 or MS-DOS operation! The ATR8000 came with the Z-80 microprocessor, 64K RAM, 4K ROM and Digital Research CP/M 2.2, with the RAM expandable to 256K which could be used as a RAMdisk.

For those of you who've never heard of this, would you believe it was developed in 1980? Why am I telling you this? Well, it seems that, even though the company that produced this (SouthWest Microcomputer Products) has long since gone out of business, one of the original designers, John McFarten, has a fair supply of the ATR8000 boards, cases and power supplies. He is interested in selling them at reduced prices (the hardware originally sold at a starting price of $349.95), and he can be reached at (817) 924-7759 or (817) 572-3626 for price and availability.

> The ST market is seeing a flurry of activity as well, with a plethora of products being shown at the recent spring COMDEX (May 9-12). MegaByte Computers was showing the ST Accelerator, the 16 MHz add-on boards using a Mostek 68000-16 co-processing chip. The Accelerator is 8/16 MHz switchable and is listed in MegaByte's ads for $199.95 (under the name Turbo ST, which has been changed for obvious reasons). MegaByte will be marketing the product, which is produced by Strange Systems of Webster, Texas. MegaByte is also planning to release an expansion bus for the ST that will come with 8 expansion connectors and allow the ST memory to be expanded to a whopping 16 Megs. There has been no announcement date of availability or price for this item. MegaByte Computer, 109 W. Bay Area, Webster, TX 77598.

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Atari 1040ST Color System	969.00
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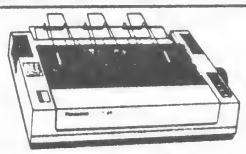

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Avatex 1200HC	119.95
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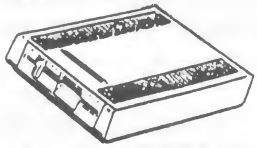

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3.5 DS/DD	1.29
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For all you Desktop Publishing fans out there who can't live without Postscript, a software emulator by the name of AltraScript was reported to be displayed at the Corporate Electronic Publishers show at the end of April. The software is apparently rather awkward to use, forcing one to print the PostScript pages to disk, boot AltraScript and then send the page to the printer.

For the DTP fan who can live with or without Postscript, TimeWorks' Publisher ST looks very good. It contains features not yet available in Publishing Partner, such as auto-hyphenation, text wrap around graphics, importation of GEM .IMG 300 dpi pictures and style sheets, to name just a few. The output is very clean and superb. [Ed: Look for a full review of Publisher ST in next month's MAM.] TimeWorks, 444 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield, IL 60015 (312)948-9200.

NeoCept has a couple of big hits with its new Word-Up ($79.95) word processor and Fontz! ($34.95), the GDOS font editor. Word-Up comes with ability to use GDOS fonts in multiple sizes; master page generation; variable page size; spell checker and thesaurus support; glossary and mail merge; left, center and right justification; graphic importation with auto text wrap around pictures; and all the other things you'd expect in a fully GEM-interfaced word processor. Fontz! allows you to create GDOS fonts from scratch or convert Amiga, Degas Elite, Hippoword and most importantly, Macintosh fonts to GDOS fonts! NeoCept, 908 Camino dos Rios, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360 (800) 666-8766 for orders/dealer inquiries only, for info call (805) 498-3840.

Gribnif Software of Hadley, MA, is reporting fairly good sales of its NeoDesk package. [Ed: See NeoDesk review elsewhere in this issue.] In a conference held on Delphi, Gribnif stated it has received "several hundred" orders already with the vast majority of purchasers sending in their registration cards with nothing but positive comments. A few (about 15 percent total) grumble about either the lack of a show as text mode or the amount of memory it takes (or both!). Gribnif has already announced an update will be available sometime in the fall which will add Text mode and many other features without increasing the program size.

Another "Alternative Desktop" has appeared for the ST, this time as a shareware product (if you like it and continue to use it, then you pay for it). The program is VDOS (Virtual to Disk Operating System) and is geared mainly toward the power user/programmer but has features for everyone. The optimal system is a 1 Meg machine with hard drive. VDOS allows for 53 programs to be defined for later execution by a single mouse click or keyboard combo and over 45 DOS utilities that you would normally find in a good command line interpreter.

Using the "Pop-up" menus that come up from the bottom of the screen, VDOS brings together the functionality and power of a CLI and the ease of use of a graphic environment. If you like the software, Marathon Computer Press asks that you send $25 plus $2 shipping and handling for which they will send you a 100+ page, professionally printed manual that shows you how to get the most out of VDOS, and they will place you on the mailing list for update notifications, etc. VDOS can be downloaded from the major networks and may even be on your local BBS or in your user group library. [Ed: If you cannot find a copy, VDOS is up on the Treasure CheST BBS, the official BBS of this magazine, (313)973-9137, 300/1200/2400 baud.]

Happy Computers, well-known maker of 8bit disk drive hardware/software modification/ enhancements is nearing release of the Discovery Cartridge System for the ST. The cartridge allows any ST to "read, analyze, format, write and verify virtually any floppy disk format used on *any* computer." It's main purpose is to allow users to make legitimate backups of protected software, but Magic Sac owners may find it even more useful, because the Discovery Cartridge can read and write Macintosh disks, and is reportedly five times faster at disk converting and costs less than the Translator One from Data Pacific.

Happy Computer makes no claims that its cartridge can be run simultaneously with the Magic Sac cartridge for direct access of Macintosh disks, though it says it may be possible because the Discovery Cartridge can be configured to allow another cartridge to be plugged in *at the same time* and chips can be added to the cartridge. Happy instead intends that Mac disks be converted directly to Magic format using their cartridge.

Other available features that can be configured by the user are 1) up to 4 floppy drives can be installed, 2) a battery backup clock may be added, 3) space for two ROM or EPROM (either 256 or 512K) chips has been left on the PC board. A switch can also be installed to allow for two separate 256K programs to be "online."

Price for the cartridge is $249.95, but if you advance order "before we ship the first unit," you can get the Discovery Cartridge for just $147. For more info and to see of the advance price is still available, contact Happy Computers, Inc., PO Box 1268, Morgan Hill, CA 95037 (408) 779-3830.

Another promising piece of hardware is the IBM box due out from Paradox by the end of the summer, assuming FCC approval. The FCC has "requested" some minor changes be made to the "ParaBox," which came before them a couple months ago. The box attaches to the entire back of the ST, with all the ST ports extending through the Parabox. Models will be available with two or eight expansion slots, both with 256K expandable to 640K and turn the ST into a 10MHz IBM. None of the ST memory will be used by the box, but you can run ST applications and IBM applications at

the same time. The units retail for $350 and $450 and should be available later this year. Paradox, if you recall, was the producer of the MS-EM software IBM emulator. Hopefully, Paradox will have better success with ParaBox. Paradox Enterprises, 150 S. Camino Seco, Suite #113, Tucson, AZ 85710, (602) 721-2023.

There is already a new version of the Universal Item Selector that should be out by the time you read this. The number of new features are too long to list here, so you can find more about version 2.0, the upgrade policy and price elsewhere in this issue.

Beckemeyer Development has announced that an implementation of UUCP, the UNIX file transfer/electronic mail/networking program, has been added to the MT C-Shell family. The program, which runs under MT C-Shell version 1.10 or higher, retails for 449.95 and registered C-Shell owners can get it for $35. For more info, contact Beckemeyer at 478 Santa Clara Ave, Oakland, CA 94610, (415) 452-1129 voice, or (415) 452-4792 BBS.

Whew! That sure is a lot... and there's lots more, but I'm running out of room, so just one last item before I close.

If you have moved up from an 8bit system (Atari 400/800/etc, Apple II, Commodore 64/128) to a 16bit machine (Atari ST, Amiga, Apple IIGS, IBM/Tandy) and you have some old Electronic Arts software laying around, you can exchange it.

All you have to do it send in the manual cover from your old 8bit EA software and a check or money order for half the price of the 16bit version, and EA will promptly ship you the 16bit version of your favorite games. Call EA at (800) 245-4525, Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm Pacific time for details.

If you call a company about something you've read in this magazine, tell 'em you saw it in the Michigan Atari Magazine!

Editorial Ramblings

Well, summer has hit the computer world and it seems that almost everyone is dying to get away from their machines and hit the beaches. A number of the participating clubs have asked if we would consider putting out a Summer issue of MAM instead of an issue every month. On top of that, the majority of advertisers are telling us "We don't advertise in the summer months...call us back in August or September." Needless to say, we can take a hint... and a vacation, too! We have decided to print a July/August issue instead of an individual issue for each of those months. That will help out the clubs that don't meet during those months, and at the same time, give us and the advertisers a break. For all you subscribers out there, you won't lose a thing because your subscriptions are for 6 or 12 ISSUES, not months.

Things are going fairly well for MAM...if you've seen copies of the last few issues of Computer Shopper, MAM has consistently been chosen one of the best user group-oriented publications each month. We would like to give a special *thanks* to all our contributors -- authors, artists and advertisers. Without you, there would be no Michigan Atari Magazine.

Speaking of artists, check out the new and all-original comic strip "Stanley and Knob" from Steve Volker (Tri-City Atari Group). You've seen Steve's artwork on the April and May issues; now he's turned his talent for creating "mousterpieces" to an innovative, humorous and thought-provoking look at the ST, computers in general and all of us. We've received a few month's worth of "Stanley and Knob" from Steve, and we think you're all going to enjoy getting to know these characters. Great job, Steve!

We've got a few other surprises in store for you in the near future... More on these as things are finalized -- wouldn't want to announce something too early like some companies we know.

In next month's issue, we'll have a report on all the goings-on at the June CES in Chicago. One of the new 8bit products which is reportedly going to be shown is the "Graphic Operating Environment" from Merrill Ward and Associates of Palm Springs, CA. (See "Atari News and Comment" for more info). Looks like it may be an interesting show, and we'll tell you all about it in the July/August issue.

Back to the present! As you've already seen from the cover, this issue contains a review of NeoDesk for the ST. This program, from Gribnif Software of Hadley, MA, is going to be a hot item... check out the review and then run to your local Atari dealer!

Also in this issue is an article from our 8bit hardware guru, Don Neff (MACE and WAUG), who tells us how to upgrade the 600XL to 64K. This article, along with Don's article for adding monitor outputs to the 600XL, which appeared in the February issue of MAM, will transform your 600XL into an 800XL. The only difference will be the casing! Look for more 8bit hardware articles from Don in the future...and now that Don took the *big* plunge and purchased a Mega 2, maybe we'll see some 16bit tinkering, too?

Other articles include a beginner's ST article on organizing your Desktop, the "Take ACTION!..." series from Gayle Sims, reviews of First Word Plus, Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 (whew!), GFA Basic Quick Reference Manual, and more. Enjoy.

Bill and Pattie Rayl

Teasers! A Look at the Support for the Atari 8Bit

By Gayle R. Sims (c) 1988

Unfortunately, commercial software and hardware support for the Atari 8bit has seen a *major* decline over the past year. Why is that? The developers and artists usually give one of three different reasons.

The first issue is, of course, piracy. Publishers claim the end profits do not support the development or production efforts for the software. This is true in any computer community, be it Atari, Commodore or IBM. No computer is immune to piracy or the illegal copying and distrubtion of products.

The second reason given is "Atari is not supporting the machine, why should we?" Every company has its share of "non-corporation" supporters and also has a track record of sloppy user support. Atari just happens to be better-known and more openly attacked, since it is closer to the users' level, being online with some national telecommunications networks. Enough said there, I believe.

The last reason seems to be a lack of end user support. Is this true, or are a few penalizing the *many* die-hard 8bit users?? Recently, Springboard released the 8bit version of the popular Newsroom desktop publishing package. When Springboard was asked why they released the software in this otherwise non-supported market, they said simply, "due to a write-in campaign hosted by Antic magazine, we believe the users want this product to come to market."

It took over four months and three programmers to get this project off the ground and into production. The system consists of Newsroom and three clip art disks sold separately. The system is impressive and looks much like the other computer versions available. Only time will tell if Springboard will be able to produce any more software for the 8bits or if the write-in campaign got results. Everything rests on this intense effort now, and for the sake of the 8bit community, I hope we do not let them down.

ICD/OSS, Inc. has long been an Atari 8bit supporter, providing one of the most widely used DOSes available for the Atari today -- SpartaDOS. Among its other products, such as hard drives and programming cartridges, ICD/OSS has quite a list. The latest venture for ICD/OSS is the long-awaited SpartaDOS-X cartridge, which will provide the same excellent DOS produced before on disk on a ROM cartridge.

Tom Harker, President of ICD/OSS, stated project development cost over $100,000, and the cartridge is almost ready to be shipped to beta testers. He does feel the effort and financial outlay will be made up for in sales and support from users. ICD/OSS has always provided an excellent support staff, never failing to help the user along with a purchase. I think this is a definite plus in ICD's favor, and, since the products are some of the best available, the SpartaDOS-X cartridge should do remarkably well.

Not every Atari software package has a commercial company standing behind it. Most often, in the world of "shareware," (software you pay for IF you like and use it) the support comes directly from the programmer.

Programmers such as Ralph Walden (8bit ARC/ARCX author), Keith Ledbetter (Express! terminal program author) and Roy Goldman (Daisy Dot I and II author) have put a lot of time and effort into their programs, with little in compensation or recognition.

No programmer releasing a product to the ShareWare Community plans on making major money, but never thought to be totally forgotten and abused. When you use a shareware program over and over, which most of us do, we are abusing it and its author, if we have not sent in our contributions and support.

"Sure," you say, "I have often spent some money to get the program" (if you downloaded it from a national commercial online service), but, you have to remember, these authors do not receive *any* commission from those services. Their only means of support is *you.* [ED: wouldn't it be nice if the services paid royalties to the programmers, as well?]

There are programs out now, released as shareware, used daily and not supported. Ten dollars for a complete terminal program, ARC utility, or enhanced printing utility program is cheap, if you compare it to the same thing on the commercial market. If you can afford to download the software from a major service, can't you afford to send $10 or so to the author if you think it is worth it? Well?

Without these companies and authors, the support for the 8bit, or any other computer, will dry up. Only we, the end-user, can keep the ships afloat and continue to spur artists and authors to create fine products.

I can be reached by US Mail at: Gayle R. Sims, Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005.

[Editors' Note: Your comments and opinions are always welcome about this subject or any other. You may upload an ascii file to our bbs (313) 973-9137, or mail us at the address on the back next to your label. We look forward to hearing from you!]

GFA BASIC: Quick Program Reference Guide for the Atari ST

Book Review by
Frank and Sally Nagy (CHAOS)

Preferred by many because of its power, accuracy and easy extensions for ST applications, GFA's BASIC is enjoyed by ST users worldwide. The language was first developed in Duesseldorf, West Germany, so it is no wonder the GFA Quick Reference Guide was also written in West Germany. Its two authors are intimately familiar with GFA BASIC. This handbook summarizes hundreds of commands and functions used in the language.

The publishers claim to give "instant information at your finger tips," and they mostly live up to it. It's nice to see this mass of info in one tidy package. It compiles materials found in the GFA BASIC Manual and GFA BASIC Book, an intermediate programming tutorial published by Michtron. But, this is a reference work for those with general knowledge of the ST and some hands-on experience with GFA BASIC. It will probably take at least an intermediate level programmer to fully appreciate it.

Three indices deliver aid to those searching for information on commands, uses and parameters. It's all there -- AES, Bios, Commands, Functions, GEMDOS, VDISYS and Xbios. Brief descriptions follow each listed command with further explanation of its proper syntax. The book detailed more specifics on commands and functions than the GFA Manual. The information is also described in a clear and fresh way.

A brief look at what some of the above means: AES, short for Application Environment Services, is responsible for graphic input functions like the Mouse-Menu-System; BIOS (Basic Input/Output System) and XBIOS (Extended Basic Input/Output System) are interfaces used to control disk access by sectors and for accessing other peripherals (i.e. printers and modems); GEMDOS (GEM Disk Operating System) is the actual operating system; VDISYS or VDI (Virtual Device Interface) routines support graphics and text output and settings.

Let's look at an example. In the command "BOX", we find:

BOX, PBOX [B, PB] Display a rectangle.

Under the box, you would then find the next few lines.

BOX x_left,y_top,x_right,y_bottom
(empty rectangle)
PBOX x_left,y_top,x_right,y_bottom
(filled in rectangle)
It displays a rectangle, either empty or filled in with a pattern. The command must be given in two coordinate pairs (x_left/y_top and x-right/y_bottom). These are the opposite diagonal corners of the rectangle.

While in the GFA BASIC Manual the same command would be described as follows:

Graphics Command Box

How: BOX x0,y0,x1,y1
Abbr.: B
Example: BOX 100,100,400,300
BOX 500,300,700,100
Purpose: Draws a rectangle with diagonally opposite corners at (x0,y0) and (x1,y1) in the color set by the color command.
Explanation: The origin of the coordinates is the top left-hand corner of the screen. The given coordinates do not have to be in the screen area (0-639,0-399 in high resolution mode) in which case only part of the rectangle will appear on the screen (see 2nd example).

(See also DEFLINE)

The Graphic Command PBOX is found on another page:

Graphic Command PBOX

How: PBOX x0,y0,x1,y1
Abbr.: PB
See: BOX

GFA Quick Reference consistently gives commands in an easy to understand format. Given the situation, more detailed or concise explanation is given.

A few mistakes were found. In the GFA Editor section on page 6, the book mis-lists <Shift + F7> as the means to scroll to the top of the screen page when it should read only <F7> to pageup. Page 31 has the filled circle command described with the "P" left off (Pcircle).

Also, it is a little disconcerting to be reading along and suddenly find yourself thrust into haupt Deutche (High German) for a few words. Although this happens only once, do you have any idea what, "der linken, oberen Ecke" and "der rechten, unteren Ecke" mean?

The rewards of a wealth of usable information are well worth putting up with these few minor mistakes and idiosyncrasies.

I'm keeping this book right by my computer for quick reference along with the GFA BASIC Manual and the GFA BASIC Book.

GFA BASIC Quick Program Reference Guide for the Atari ST is distributed by Abacus for $14.95. GFA BASIC is distributed by Michtron for $59.95.

Practical Microbuffer Mini 512
Print Buffer from Practical Peripherals

ST Hardware Review by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

Most of us know the practicality of print buffers and what time-savers they are. Unfortunately, they use up valuable RAM and always seem to be sized too small or large for the job. Finally, someone has introduced a hardware buffer both affordable and small enough to fit on anyone's computer desk.

Practical Microbuffer Mini 512 by Practical Peripherals (a mouthful!) has solved this problem by using an external buffer. This frees up RAM and is always available when needed. It measures 4" wide by 5" deep by 1" high with an external power supply.

The circuit board has four sockets for 256K DRAMs (dynamic random access memory) and four sockets for 1Meg DRAMs giving the user the option of running any buffer size from 32K to 512K, depending on what chips are used.

The only stipulation is chips must all be the same size. I selected four 256K DRAMs, inserted them in the correct sockets, made sure the memory select jumper was on the correct pins, turned on the power and started printing. Everything worked fine the first time!

The Microbuffer costs $100.00 with 32K DRAM already installed. I bought four 256K chips (150 nano-seconds) for $9 each (They used to sell for $3.50 before the prices went up.).

So, for $136.00 plus tax, I had a 128K stand-alone buffer and when the megabit chips come down in price, I'll be able to upgrade to 512K. At one time, the megabit chips were selling for 26 dollars. Now that the US is starting to manufacture them, the prices should drop below 15 dollars before long. Buying a stand-alone buffer makes sense if you plan to upgrade your printer to a faster 9-pin or a 24-pin model.

Once you have a large buffer available, you can start using it as a print spooler by sending a text file to the printer, then a top of form command, then send another text file, a top of form, and so on. While your printer is working for perhaps an hour, you'll be able to run another program.

The supplied manual covers possible problems and solutions, discusses handshaking, and even tells about a built-in "self-test" mode and how to use it.

There's an LED that lights up for power on, but during self-test mode, it will check the memory and blink either fast for memory fault and print out the location of the bad chip or blink slow for correct operation. The unit comes with a five-year parts and labor warranty, very unusual in today's market.

This buffer really shines with a graphics program like Publishing Partner(PP). A typical PP page will use up at least 200K of graphics memory, and take 15 to 20 minutes printing on a 80 cps printer like an Epson MX-80. Now you'll be able to start working on the second page while printing the first page.

Many CAD programs generate a file of perhaps 40 kilobytes, but will take up about 200K while printing. Even word processors can tie up your computer for minutes at a time. With a hardware buffer, it's only ten seconds and you're back on the keyboard.

Printing a 51K text file from the desktop takes one and a half minutes to load the buffer and eighteen minutes to print the file. The buffer frees up the computer for sixteen and a half minutes! If you print a lot of text, a print buffer could save you time and make your computer sessions more productive.

Practical Peripherals, 31245 La Baya Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91362 (818) 991-8200

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Take ACTION! with Your Programming!

Number Four in a Series by Gayle Sims (c) 1988

You may be asking, "Oh sure, I know how to enter a program now, but then what do I do with it? Do I need to save it? How do I save it? Does it need to be compiled? What form is it stored in on the disk? How do I run it to see if it works?" Lots of common questions, which have easy answers!

First of all, before any program can be "RUN" or executed, you will have to Compile it with the ACTION! compiler. Easy enough, since the compiler is already accessible from the monitor. From the monitor command line, COMPILE is the simple command to remember. It can be one of a few forms:

COMPILE <return>: Compiles the code currently in the ACTION! editor.

C <return>: Same as above...you are allowed to use the first letter as an abbreviation.

C "D1:MYFILE.ACT" <return>: Compiles the program "MYFILE.ACT" from device D1:.

One of the features of the ACTION! compiler is the error checker. If the compiler finds a syntax error, structural error or an illegal call, etc., in your program, it will abort the compile. It will show you the line where the error occurred, and give you an error number. The error numbers will correspond to the errors listed in the back of your manual. Also, it will show errors that are normally shown within the Atari Operating System.

If your program compiled without errors, typing "RUN" from the monitor prompt will execute your program. This is the same as loading a binary file from DOS.

Always remember to save your files every few lines, and *before* you compile or run a program. It will save you time in the long run, in case something happens, like a system crash, cat's chewed the cord or the power goes out!

All source code can be stored on disk with the NAME.ACT format. The .ACT extender reminds you that it is an ACTION! file which has not been compiled. To save your source code, the command was <CTRL><SHIFT>W while you are in the editor.

Once the file has been compiled and you wish to save the working program, you will need to WRITE it to disk with this command (from the monitor) W "D1:FINISHED.COM" <return>.

This command saves your compiled source code as an executable program file. As I stated before, you will be able to load it from DOS as a binary file. Those of you who are SpartaDOS users, you just type FINISHED from the D1: prompt and the program will load and run, like all binary files, as long as it ends with the .COM extender!

See, told you it was easy! Get ready for the next issue, we will be putting all this new knowledge to work in a real program!!!

Ordering and support for ICD/OSS products are available by calling 815/968-2228 from 8AM to 5PM CST Monday through Friday. For more information, write to ICD/OSS, 1220 Rock Street, Rockford, IL 61101.

I can be reached by US Mail at: Suite #6-216, PO Box 4005, Carmichael, CA 95609-4005.

Super 8Bit Graphics!

By David Bryant (GKAUG)

The May 1988 Issue of Analog Magazine has a way to display high detailed graphics with 80 x 96 resolution. Listing #4 is a kaleidoscope demonstration but it requires several steps to get it going. The following will make listing #1 and #4 a ML program that can be run from DOS or named AUTORUN.SYS for instant graphics.

1. First change line 1160 in listing #4 (APACKAL2.OBJ) to:
   1160 DATA 2,1,252,96,254,96,3,0,2,224,2,225,2,0,96,0,617

2. Now copy listing #1 (APACSYS.OBJ) and listing #4 to another disk.

3. Use the ATARI DOS 2.0 or 2.5 copy with append to join the two files. (You type what is shown in italics below, hitting RETURN after each line entered.)
   C
   COPY--FROM, TO?
   D1:APACKAL2.OBJ, APACSYS.OBJ/A

4. Rename APACSYS.OBJ to AUTORUN.SYS.

What you have done is add some code to APACKAL2.OBJ so the address where it is loaded ($6000) is put into "RUNAD." After the file is loaded, instead of control being passed back to DOS, it is passed to the loaded program and the graphics demo is run automatically. Sure makes it a lot easier.

My thanks to Ian Chadwick's "Mapping the Atari" by Compute! for the programming hints.

64K Upgrade for Your 600XL

By Don Neff (MACE, WAUG)

Introduction

The February, 1988 issue of Michigan Atari Magazine contained my article about adding video monitor outputs to the 600XL. My assumption, while writing that article, was you would use it with a memory upgrade to create an 800XL from your 600XL. This assumption was reasonable because I believed (and still believe) that several people in the Atari community developed do-it-yourself memory upgrades for the 600XL just as they did for the rest of the Atari 8bit line (MPP put out a commercial plug-in 64K upgrade).

To my surprise, not one of my local fellow hardware hackers knew of such an upgrade article (although they too said someone must have written one). That left me only one option -- design a 64K memory upgrade for the 600XL myself. This is my first (and last!) 8bit memory upgrade project.

The Project

There are three possible memory upgrade methods for the 600XL. The first is to use eight separate 4164 memory chips just like the 800XL. The temptation for choosing this path is that the chips are easily obtained. In fact, you or a friend may have several 4164 or 4264 RAM chips left from a previous XL/XE 256/320K upgrade.

Unfortunately, this type of an upgrade would require you to cut several circuit traces and wire in a couple of extra addressing chips with a dozen jumpers. Besides, we'll be using those extra 4164 memory chips in a 64K parallel printer buffer in a future article.

A second possibility would be to use a pair of easily obtained 256K memory chips, each chip storing 4 bits of every 8bit byte. This would require complex multiplexing of the data lines which would, in turn, slow down your computer.

The third possibility, and the one we'll be using, requires some special RAM chips. This is offset by the convenience of not cutting any circuit traces or adding extra addressing chips. In fact, we'll only be adding three jumpers to get the address signals we'll need! First, let's look at why the extra address signals are even needed at all.

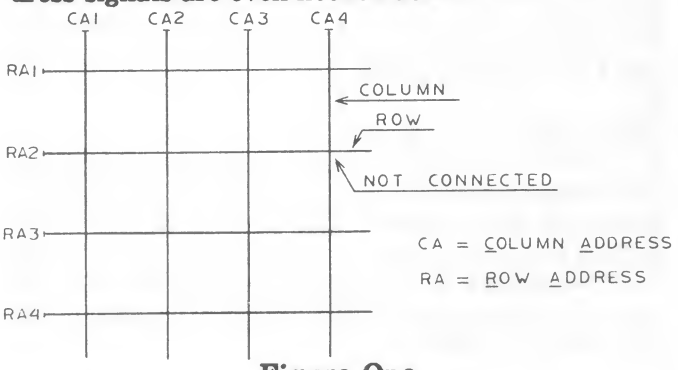

Figure One

How Memory Works

Figure 1 shows a typical matrix which we are going to use to illustrate RAM operation. Every line in Figure 1 represents a wire. The Horizontal wires are called "Rows" and the Vertical wires are called "Columns." There is no connection between any row wire and any column wire. There also is no connection between any row wire and any other row wire. Likewise, there is no connection between any of the column wires. Each wire is independent and has its own individual Number to indicate it's location or "Address." The number also includes a prefix to indicate if the number is for a Row (R) or Column (C).

The first row wire is labeled Row Address 1 which is abbreviated RA1. Row wire two is labeled RA2, row wire three is RA3, and so on. Similarly, the first Column wire is labeled Column Address 1 or CA1. The rest of the column wires follow this numbering sequence just like the row wires.

Since every row and column has a unique number, the points where they cross are also unique. Figure 2 shows the upper left corner of the matrix from Figure 1. We've connected a light bulb at each crossing point. One lead of each bulb is attached to a row wire. The other lead of the bulb is attached to a column wire. The battery at the left has to follow a strict rule: one battery lead can touch only row wires and the other battery lead can touch only column wires. Also, only one row and one column can be touched at a time.

If we touch one battery lead to Row wire 2 (RA2) and the other battery lead to Column wire 1 (CA1) then light bulb "C" will light up. The current flows through CA1, into the bulb and out through RA2 to get back to the battery. Bulb "A" can't light up because there is no path for the electricity once it gets to RA1. Electricity needs a complete path to get back where it came from before it can do any work such as lighting a bulb. We would have to move the battery lead from RA2 to RA1 to light bulb "A." What would happen to bulb "C" if we did that? What must we do to light bulb "B?" How would you light bulb "D?"

Let's replace those four light bulbs with four capacitors. Now when you touch the battery leads to RA2 and CA1 capacitor, "C" will be charged up (capacitors act like short-lived batteries). Later, we can check all the capacitors by applying the leads of a voltmeter to the row and column wires. When the voltmeter leads touch RA2 and CA1, the voltmeter will show that capacitor "C" has a charge on it. Our matrix "remembered" that the battery leads touched RA2 and CA1 because of the charge on capacitor "C" at their intersection. The matrix also "remembered" none of the other row or column

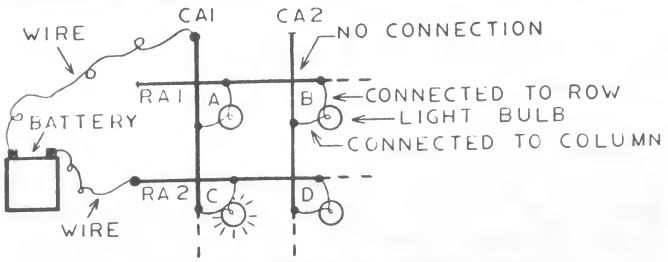

Figure Two-Matrix Addressing

wires were touched by the battery leads because none of the other capacitors were charged.

Each computer memory chip contains thousands of capacitors which "remember" by holding a charge. Each of these capacitors represents a single bit of information. A bit can be only one of two states -- "One" (High or On) or "Zero" (Low or Off). The capacitors represent these states by being charged for a One and discharged for a Zero. A computer stores data in memory as Ones and Zeros by charging or discharging the appropriate capacitors. The computer reads memory by checking which capacitors are charged and which are discharged and converting this information back to Ones and Zeros again.

Notice with the two rows and two columns of Figure 2, we can elect to light any bulb at one of four intersections. This is called a 2-by-2 matrix which gives four possible choices (2 rows multiplied by 2 columns = four intersections). To increase the number of intersections (memory locations) we need to add more row and column wires. Figure 1 has twice as many rows and columns (four each) as Figure 2. This four-by-four matrix gives 16 intersections. Increasing the rows and columns by a factor of two increased the available memory by a factor of four. A few wires make a large difference in the number of memory locations available.

We need only to add two jumpers to gain two address lines and a third jumper for a column select line to increase the 600XL memory to 64K.

Making the Modification

Open the case of your 600XL and remove the circuit board. The 4416 (4 bit by 16K) memory chips, U11 and U12, are located at the front right corner of the cartridge holder. Gently remove both of these chips and replace them with HM50464P (4 bit by 64K) memory chips (or equivalent).

Remove U16 (a 74LS51 chip to the left of U11) and bend pin #8 up so it sticks straight out from the chip body as shown in Figure 3. Insert U16 back into its socket. Unsolder and lift the lead of resistor R36 indicated as point "Y" in Figure 3. Solder a jumper between this resistor lead (point "Y") and pin #8 of U16 (point "X"). Insulate the ends of the jumper so they will not touch other parts of the circuit.

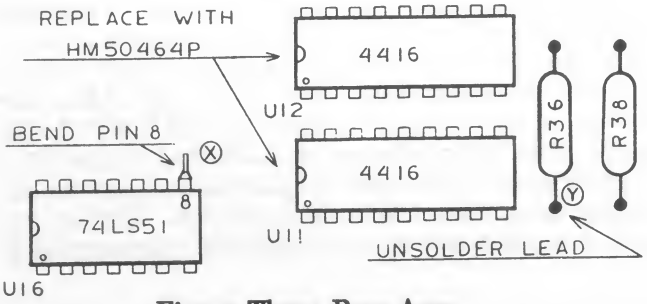

Figure Three-Ram Area

Locate U5 and U6 (74LS158) which are directly in front of U11 and U12. These chips handle the row and column addressing inside the memory matrix. We have to add two lines to these chips. Gently remove U5 and bend pin #3 up so it sticks straight out from the chip body as shown in Figure 4. Insert U5 back into its socket. Now remove U6 and bend its #10 pin out and replace it back in its socket. Notice that the two pins you bent are nearly touching the other chip. Cut enough off of each of the two pins to prevent any shorts.

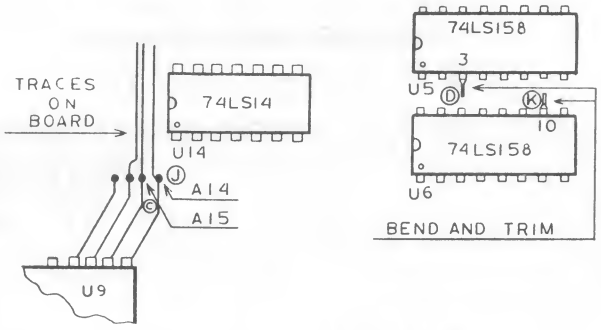

Figure Four-Address Area

Locate U14 which is to the left of U5 and U6. Notice the circuit traces to the left of U14. We are interested in the two traces indicated in Figure 4 as points "C" and "J". Connect jumper from point "C" to pin #3 of U5 (point "D" in Figure 4). This jumper sends address bit A15 to U5. Connect jumper from point "J" to pin #10 of U6 (point "K" in Fig. 4). This jumper sends address bit A14 to U6.

Make sure all your IC chips are inserted properly with their #1 pins in the lower left corner. Check your jumper wiring against Figure 3 and Figure 4. You should have a jumper from point X to point Y. You should have a second jumper from point C to point D and a third jumper between points J and K. Make sure the jumper ends are insulated to prevent shorts with nearby objects. Reassemble your computer case and run the memory self test as a final check.

Other Memory Upgrades

I won't be doing any other 8bit memory upgrade articles because the subject has been covered by dozens of other writers. The quality of the numerous do-it-yourself memory upgrade articles varies from excellent down to ridiculous (one upgrade uses 30 chips to give 128K which isn't compatible with anything else).

The upgrade article you use should meet certain standards to insure the success of the finished upgrade. The standards I suggest are: Clear writing; Complete detail; Good drawings; No mistakes; Sensible design; XE Compatibility.

I know of only three people who have met those standards with every one of their projects. They are: Scott Peterson, Jay Torres and Claus Buchholz. If you are trying to decide between several articles about the same modification, choose one authored by any of these three gentlemen. Your chances of success will improve and you'll be delighted with their trouble-free designs.

Parts Sources

Usually I try to design the items in these articles with Radio Shack parts. That's only because they are the most convenient place to buy parts -- not the best. Unfortunately, they don't carry much variety, so we are going to start using other parts sources. Write to each one and request their free catalogs or flyers.

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Rogue, an Epyx Adventure

ST Software Review by Patricia Snyder-Rayl

Close your eyes for a moment, and (oops! open them back up to keep reading!) imagine you're a solitary, red-haired figure named Rodney about to embark on the adventure of a life-time -- or two or three! You feel some irresistable force directing your movements -- left, right, up and down -- throwing you into closed doors, hidden treasure, welcome food and water, and the most fearsome monsters you could dream of.

Frantically you battle for your life, ever urged on by the knowledge of unexplored regions in this evil and twisted Dungeon of Doom with untold riches -- not to mention you're on a quest for the sacred Amulet of Yendor to restore order to the world you used to call home.

You fight through the many levels and past the many monsters such as nymphs who steal magic items but don't harm you, or giants, vampires and invisible phantoms who can kill with one blow. Enchanted armor lies along the way to help ward off the fatal blows along with magic potions to help you see in the dark. Scrolls, wands or rings, to help control your appetite if food is scarce, also can be found among the ruins and caverns of this horrifying place. The path is fraught with danger, but you are stout of heart and know the fate of the world rests on your sword.

Rogue, from Epyx, is an excellent game for the beginner and intermediate game player. It may be a bit limited for the more advanced gamer, especially after Dungeon Master, but I still recommend this "oldie-but-goodie." Rogue has been available for the ST for two years now, and was one of the first ST games available. It's still holding its own.

There are two modes to view the screen: close-up to your character or far above him seeing the whole level, not room by room. This keeps you from getting lost, since you just have to hit the space bar to see where you are on the level, and hit the bar once again to see the actual action.

Rogue creates the rooms in each level randomly, so there is no use in mapping...the game is different each time you play. Similarly, treasure, food and magic items are randomly placed on each level, which can help and hinder you. This can make for frustrating play as you frantically fight off monsters while searching for food; or it can be lots of fun to walk into a room filled with goodies!

Rogue comes on one single-sided (copy protected) disk and runs on any ST with a color monitor. When we first bought it, we were still loading TOS from disk, which ate up half the 512K memory, and the program ran fine! Eventhough Rogue has been available for a long time, it's still a good game and a bargain ($20 to $30 at local dealers or mail order). Epyx, 1043 Kiel Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94089.

Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the World of Atari ST computers

An Epidemic strikes

In the past few months, a scourge has found it's way into the computer community. Benign programs, while running normally suddenly become data killers, attacking the information stored on hard drives or floppies, rendering them useless. The cause--*Computer Viruses*.

Computer Viruses have been around for several years, and have in the past caused widespread damage to valuable programs and databases. Their impact has been significant and concern over the susceptibility of all computers to invasion from these potentially harmful programs has grown recently as a new wave of these killers hits.

What are Computer Viruses ?

Computer viruses are first and foremost, programs with unintended side effects. They are programs written with the express intent of invading your computer programs, (unknown to you of course) and in their worst form, causing serious damage to the programs they infect.

Like a human virus, once implanted, the virus will strike it's victim with deadly certainty. The effects can be disastrous. Some viruses are meant as pranks and will simply print a message of some sort like "*Your computer has been invaded by Alien beings.*" Harmless viruses will do no further damage, and once their message has been displayed, the virus dies and goes away. In this guise, they are simply a programmer's way of showing his skill. His silly way of laughing.

Regrettably however, the majority of Viruses infecting computers are not of this benevolent type. Most of these secret programs are meant to destroy or harm your valuable data and if undetected, will certainly do so. Generally they are directed at destroying data on hard drives, but they can and do also infect floppy disks as well. As a matter of fact, this is the method that most Viruses use to travel from system to system, spreading their destructive code as they are copied and distributed.

The ultimate effect of any virus is up to the programmer of the clandestine program. If a programmer chooses to create code with devastating results, then once unleashed, the code will effectively corrupt any system it comes in contact with. If the programmer chose to create a Virus to kill your data, you can be certain that it will do so if it is not detected, and neutralized.

One thing is certain, they do their mischief with your interaction, since *you* must cause them to run.

Viruses descend from a concept created many years ago, called a "*Trojan Horse.*" In the 1950's, stories circulated about a payroll program that stopped when a certain programmer's name was removed from the file. To reactivate the file, they had to reinstall the programmers name. Presumably, this was his way of preventing the company from ever firing him, or his revenge for their having done so. There were many stories of operating systems that would display strange messages for one day every year - on a particular staff member's birthday.

These programmers were, of course, burying lines of code deep within their programs and routines. Because the side effects came as such a surprise to the other users of the system, the reference to the famous horse full of Trojan soldiers seemed appropriate.

A virus takes the Trojan Horse one step further. One of its side effects is to spread itself from one program to another, much like a common cold does between people. Hence the name, "Virus." A virus spreads by inserting copies of itself onto other programs on the same Hard Drive. This process is possible because most systems allow you full Read/Write access to all of your personal files. Clever programmers, intent on implanting their particular nasty virus can even bypass the Read only aspect of a file by simply acting as you, and requesting a change of status on the file.

How Do you get infected ?

Well, as a matter of fact, it is disturbingly easy. You pick up a disk from a swap meet, or as mentioned, from someone elses' hard drive. Someone may give you a "cracked" copy of a commercial program that has been infected. Once you run these programs, you have infected your system. Some viruses can lay dormant for years, so if you pass along the infected file to a friend, you have just spread the disease.

A recent outbreak occurred at Leheigh University in Pennsylvania, where an infectious virus spread among campus PC's. The clever assassin eluded capture by clinging to other programs and then eating at data files the fourth time that the newly infected program was used. The virus erased the user's File Allocation Table (FAT) and zero sector boot tracks, leaving files beyond help from any damage-restoring utilities.

Virus programs are most often hidden in what appears to be a useful piece of shareware or Public Domain software, especially those planted on Bulletin Boards. Taking a file from one of these systems is risky. If you do manage to get an infected file, and then copy it to your hard drive, you are asking for trouble. Trusted employees who may have a grudge may also plant the virus on a LAN network server, and thereby provide the potential for spreading the virus with incredible swiftness.

It will never happen to me !!!

In December of 1987, the massive worldwide electronic mail system of the IBM corporation had to be shut down because of the uncontrollable proliferation of a chain letter Christmas greeting called "XMAS.EXEC." Someone had inserted a virus into the system. This one ran wild, out of control. It was fortunate for IBM, that it was a harmless virus that merely sent Christmas greetings to everyone. *It happened to IBM !* Now imagine that

it can't happen to you. If it can happen to IBM, believe me, it can happen to anyone.

Is there a cure ?

Fortunately, there are several methods of preventing a virus from spreading, or damaging your files. If you are capable of reading machine specific code and have the time to scan all new programs for infection, this is the safest method. Unfortunately, this is not for the majority of us. There are however several programs now released into the public domain that will spot many of the current viruses, and correct the problem if it exists. One of these programs for the ST is called "VIRUSKIL.PRG" and can be found on most local BBS's. You might want to grab a copy of it, but *BEWARE* because it too could be a Virus in disguise. If you suspect a program could be a Virus, *Don't use it !*

ST owners are less susceptible to this type of damage because of the way that the ST boots. The ST does not require a full disk read every time a disk is loaded into the drive, so the chances of spreading a virus are less likely. Our Amiga friends are not so lucky. Neither are Mac users. Also, many of the viruses are dependent upon a system being alive at all times. Once you shut off a system, many of the viruses will die, but they can reappear if you re-infect your system by using the same disk again.

Be careful, and you will most likely be ok. Chances are, that is ....

Don't panic, there may be no need...

All of this rhetoric on Viruses and their effect on your personal computer may in fact be just so much hyperbole. Let's look at the facts. For well over two months now, the computer industry has wallowed in it's usual high octane hype about a new news item - the virus - . It may be stricly that. Some of the rumors about what viruses have purportedly done are wildly speculative at best. Ask yourself this question. Do you know anyone *personally*, who has been hit by a virus ? I know a lot of people who run, have access to, or own computers. Their numbers are in the thousands. None of them have yet been hit by a virus. I also run a BBS called system EX-10 Canada (free plug !) It is the largest free access Database in the world, and to date none of our thousands of callers has ever reported that they have been hit by a virus. What that suggests is that the problem may be more fiction than fact. Let there be no doubt about this though. There are viruses out there that are real and deadly, there just aren't a whole lot of them. Thank goodness for that..

A nightmare on Elm Street, part 3

By the time you read this, May 13th will have come and gone. According to many rumors cirulating when this article was written (early April) this is the D-Day for Viruses. That infamous friday is supposed to be the day that the Virus strain MS-DOS is supposed to attack computers around the world, doing their worst. I thought that Freddy was limited to Elm street!

If Viruses were as widely spread as rumors suggest, then many world wide computers will have died on that fateful Friday the thirteenth. If no major plague has struck, then this will have been just another of the speculative rumours that spread so rampantly in the computer arena.

This much is certain. viruses are not new, they have existed in one form or another for almost as many years as there have been programmers. What is new is the suggestion that since some brilliant, though misguided, programmers decided to attack some of the major computer installations around the known universe, that they are now poised to strike against the installed base of personal computers around the world. Like most serial crimes, it is presumed that there will be clones of viruses for most computers made today. I suppose it's possible, but highly doubtful in my opinion.

How much reaction therfore is appropriate? Under-react and you just may be the guy who gets it in the disk drive. Over-react, and you may give yourself ulcers over something not worth the trouble. It is certainly safe for me to predict that there will be Virus attacks in the future, and I won't predict that you will be hit. The choice of reaction is totally up to you. Safe is always better than sorry, and you may want to at least consider your sources of software. Take a few moments to at least check out anything that appears suspicious. At the very least, write protect your diskettes. The virus is helpless against that simple little defense.

NEWS notes...

Atari is reportedly entering the monitor business and is expected to show a prototype of a 1260 by 960 pixel colour display at COMDEX. Although production has not yet started on the new monitor, it will be made in the USA. Currently Atari monitors are manufactured in the Far East..

The New monitor will offer four resolution modes including CGA, EGA and VGA. Reportedly they will operate at 1260 by 960 pixels with 16 shades of grey.

The unit has a 100 MHz bandwidth and will be priced under $1,000. Atari plans to sell the monitor on an OEM basis as well as bundling it with it's new Transputer computer, and the 68030 based PC's, all of which feature the CPU circuitry on a single card and share one basic chassis.

The single card system shown in Europe at the Hanover faire differs from the motherboard based system shown by Atari at COMDEX last November.

Both the Transputer and the 68030 computers will have 4 Mbytes of RAM, a 3.5", 720 or 1.44 Mbyte floppy drive, and a 44 Mbyte hard drive installed. An 80 Mbyte hard drive and a colour monitor will also be offered.

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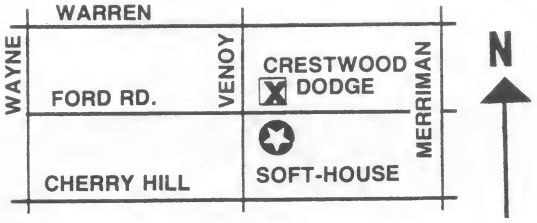

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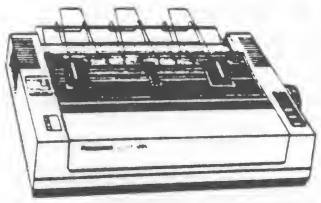

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Word Processing on an Atari ST: First Word Plus

By Thomas P. Sturza (MACE)

As a new ST user, I knew that I wanted a word processor that was easy to use, supported my printer and had a spell checking feature. I decided to ask the experts, the members of our ST SIG, what word processor they recommended.

Initially, they recommended that I purchase 1st Word by GST Software. However, they also indicated that I would be up and running faster if I chose ST Writer, because it was almost an exact copy of the AtariWriter+ software that my entire family had been using on our 8bit computers. In either case, they said, I wouldn't have the spell checking feature that I desired. I would have to purchase a separate spell checking program.

So, I downloaded a copy of ST Writer from a local BBS and gave it a try. It was almost identical to AtariWriter, and, for the most part, would be an adequate word processor for me and my family.

But it didn't have a spell checker!!!! And I strongly believe that a spell checking feature from within the word processor would serve our purposes better than an external one.

I soon discovered that I could have everything I desired, all in one package. The program was called "1st Word Plus" by GST Software. The only problem appeared to be that GST Software was located in England and there wasn't a US distributor for the software yet. Well, Atari Explorer magazine came to my rescue.

In the "Letters to the Editor" column, they listed a company that signed a distribution agreement with GST Software to market "1st Word Plus" in the US. This company is Prospero Software, 100 Commercial Street, Suite 306, Portland, Maine 04101, Ph: (207) 874-0382.

I gave them a call a few days before a major holiday and had a very nice discussion with one of their technical people. I asked how I could purchase 1st Word Plus, since there didn't appear to be any dealers selling the software yet. I was told that I could purchase the program directly from Prospero for $99.95 plus $5.00 shipping and handling. I could pay for my purchase by personal check, money order or by using my MasterCard or VISA charge cards. I could order either by mail or by telephone.

I said that I would take one, charged it to my Visa and was told I would have it within 10 days. Only a few days later, UPS delivered my copy of 1st Word Plus. A company that delivers what it promises -- amazing!

Well, my son and I are now learning to use the new word processor. It does appear to be a bit harder to learn than ST Writer, but it also has many additional features and a spell checker. After we get familiar with the program, we'll see about writing another article for the Journal. By the way, this article was written using "1st Word Plus" and my initial feelings are "I LIKE IT!!"

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Learning to Live with Your ST

By Bill Rayl

Organizing Your Desktop

If you're one of the newcomers on the ST block, chances are you've never used a system quite like the one you now own. Learning to work with and in the GEM environment can be a confusing – and often frightening – experience. Hopefully, this (and future planned) articles will help you become more comfortable with using the machine, teach you a few tricks that aren't mentioned in the manuals and generally give you an overview of what the ST can do for you.

What is GEM?

GEM stands for Graphics Environment Manager, and it is through GEM that we communicate with the ST most of the time. You can think of GEM as a translator, interpreting your commands (clicks of the mouse button, etc.) and telling the operating system of the ST what those commands mean. In the same way a DOS such as MS-DOS or SpartaDOS interacts with a system, GEM is an interface between you and your computer. The difference is that GEM uses icons, windows and dialog boxes instead of command words or menus.

Much of your interaction with GEM will be from the ST Desktop, primarily for disk functions such as getting directories.

In this first article, let's focus on setting up your ST Desktop in an organized fashion. We'll go through explaining how to "customize" your icons and various setups for disk directories. Then, we'll see some suggestions for organizing the Desktop that may not have occurred to you. And, finally, we'll save all our hard work so the ST will remember the setup.

A Simple Resolution

Let's jump right in! For those of you who have color monitors (or color and monochrome monitors), you will want to decide which screen resolution you want as your default. Most people choose medium resolution, which gives an 80 column display.

Since the default is low resolution, you will need to change this if you want 80 columns. Also, if you're one of those people who switch between color and monochrome monitors and want medium resolution whenever using the color screen, you will need to follow these instructions as well. If you set up for medium resolution with the color monitor, your monochrome Desktop will not be affected. However, if you set up your Desktop with the monochrome monitor, you will be dumped into low resolution when switching to the color monitor!

Without further ado, let's get into medium rez. Move the mouse pointer up to the "Options" entry at the top of the Desktop. This will cause a "Drop Down Menu" to appear on your screen. Move the mouse pointer to the option labeled "Set Preferences" and click the left mouse button once. You will be presented with three choices: Low, Medium and High.

The "High" choice will appear lighter in color than the other two, indicating that it is not a valid option (The ST knows that your color monitor isn't capable of monochrome display). To change to medium resolution, all we need to do is place the mouse pointer over the "Medium" choice and click the left mouse button once.

Those Pesky Little Icons

There are only two standard icons on the ST Desktop -- drive icons and the trash icon. The drive icons resemble little filing cabinet drawers and they are used for accessing the disk drives connected to your ST. Dragging files to the trash icon will delete the files from your disk(s).

These icons can be moved around on your Desktop so you can place them wherever you feel most comfortable. To do this, simply place the mouse pointer over the icon you wish to move, press down the left mouse button without releasing it (the icon will "go black") and then "drag" the icon's "ghost" wherever you want to place it on the Desktop. As soon as you release the mouse button, the real icon will move to its new place.

You can also change the names of your disk icons! Let's change the name of the "Drive A" icon just to see how it's done. Move the mouse pointer over to the "filing cabinet" labeled "A" and press the left mouse button once, causing the icon to "go black". Then, move the mouse pointer up to the "Options" Drop Down Menu and click the left mouse button on the "Install Disk Drive..." option. You will be presented with the "Dialog Box" below (a Dialog Box is GEM's way of asking you for input.).

Now, either hit the <Tab> key once or place the mouse pointer over the words "Floppy Disk," and click the left mouse button once to get the cursor on

"Yes I mind if you set your printer on my lap! . . . "

the Icon Label line. Either <Backspace> over the current name or hit the <Esc> key to instantly erase the name with only one keystroke. Type the words "Disk One" but *do not* hit <Return> when finished. The bold frame around "Cancel" indicates it is the default and hitting a <Return> will cancel what we've just done. Click on the "Install" option and that's all there is to it!

Changing the name of the trash can is a bit more complicated -- you must use an editor, word processor or a program -- so we'll save that for a future article.

Getting a Directory Listing

Using the "double-click" method of opening a directory window can be one of the most frustrating things for the first couple times you try it. In theory, it's quite simple -- quickly "tap" the mouse button twice. The first time I tried, I couldn't get it to work...and the second...and the third...! Some people take to it naturally and can double-click that mouse with no problem. For others, like myself, it was a skill acquired only after diligent effort.

Once you get the hang of it, it's easy...until then, you can use the following steps:

1) Place a disk containing some files in Drive A. Use the ST Language Disk that came with your system or a disk of "public domain" software if you received any from your dealer or local User Group.
2) Single click the left mouse button on the icon for Drive A.
3) Put the mouse pointer over the "File" Drop Down Menu at the very top of the Desktop.
4) Click the left mouse button once on the "Open" option and a disk directory "window" will appear on your Desktop.

Any time "double-clicking" is referred to by a software package, you can use the above steps to accomplish the same thing. Sooner or later, though, you will want to get the hang of double-clicking, since it makes using GEM much easier.

Now that you have the disk directory window open, you probably see something similar to Figure 2. The figure shows you the directory with the files shown as icons. Directories consist of either individual files or folders. Folders are simply subdirectories which can, in turn, contain individual files or folders. Due to limitations built into the operating system, you can only have a maximum of 112 files on a floppy disk -- whether single or double sided, and you should never exceed a total of 40 folders across all directories open at one time. (Nasty things happen if you do!)

When viewing directories in icon mode, you will notice that some files look different than others. That is because the ST uses the file extension (characters after the "." in the filename) to determine the File Type. The figure above shows how the ST represents executable files, non-executable (data) files and folders.

The Three Types of ST File Icons

Folders | Executable Programs | Data Files

If you prefer to see your files in a "more recognizable" format, you can view them in Text mode by moving the mouse pointer to the "View" Drop Down Menu at the top of your screen. If you look at the current settings, you will notice a check mark beside the "Show as Icons" entry, indicating that that is the current selection. Simply click the left mouse button while positioning the pointer over the "Show as Text" entry and the directory window will instantly reflect your choice.

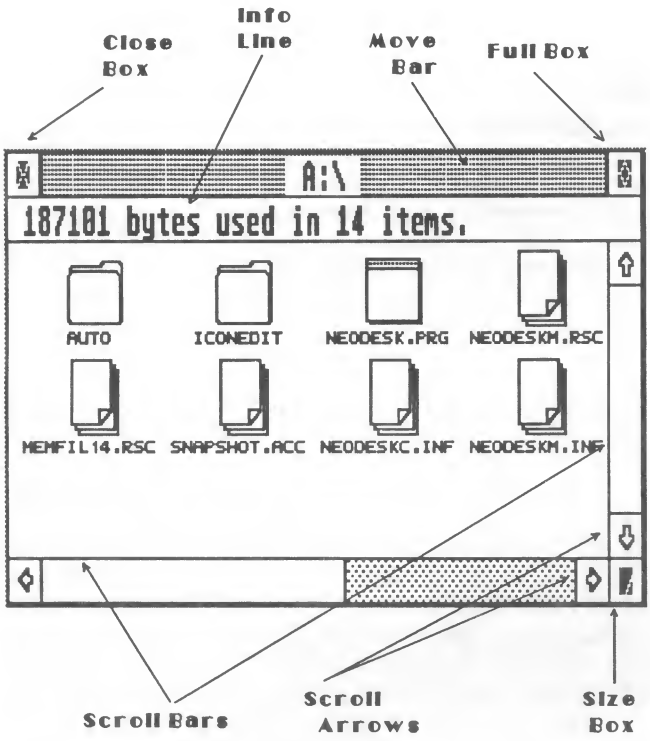
While you were looking at this Drop Down Menu, perhaps you noticed the various Sort Directory choices? Here's a quick description of what each of these choices do:

Sort by Name	Does an alphabetic sort of files using the entire filename
Sort by Date	Displays the directory with the most recently created file shown first
Sort by Size	Shows directory listings in descending order of file size in bytes (i.e., largest file first)
Sort by Type	Similar to name, alphabetically sorts by file extension. This way, all files with similar extensions (such as .PRG or .PIC) will be grouped together

The default setting for this is Sort by Name... again, you can tell which option is currently selected because it will have a check mark next to it. Place the mouse pointer over the Sort option you want and click the left mouse button once. The disk directory now appears sorted as you have asked.

Once you have a disk directory window open, the contents of the window will remain the same even if you remove the disk from the drive and put a new disk in the drive. To update the directory window's contents, simply press the <Esc> key.

Parts of a GEM Window



Learning to do Windows

Windows are a fundamental part of GEM-based programs, and learning how to manipulate a directory window will help you deal with any GEM window. The figure above is a directory window with all the various parts labeled.

Clicking on the "Close Box" closes the window, removing it from the Desktop. The "Full Box" is like a toggle switch. The first time you click on it, the window expands to its maximum size, usually filling the entire Desktop. Click on the Full Box again, and the window automatically shrinks back to its original size.

The horizontal and vertical Scroll Bars are used to look at the contents of the window when there are more items in a window than can be displayed at one time. The window will represent the portion of "hidden" entries by shading part of the Scroll Bar(s). You can scroll through a window in a number of ways.

1. Clicking on the Scroll Arrows will move the display one entry in the direction the arrow points. So, if your disk contains ten files, but your directory window is only large enough to display two files at a time, clicking on the arrow adjacent to the shading will cause the window to display one new file while a file that was previously displayed scrolls out of view. If there are no "hidden" items in the direction a scroll arrow points, clicking on the arrow does nothing. If the unshaded portion of the Scroll Bar is tight up against the Scroll Arrow Box, there are no "hidden" entries in that direction.

2. Placing the mouse pointer over some part of the shaded portion of the Scroll Bar and then clicking the left mouse button once will cause the window to move the current window's size worth of entries in the indicated direction. For instance, if your disk contains ten files and your directory window is only wide enough to display two files at a time, clicking on the shaded scroll area will display the next two files on the disk while the original two files scroll out of view.

3. If you wish to move quickly from one end of a window to the other, or to a specific area of the window, you can place the mouse pointer over the unshaded portion of the Scroll Bar, press and hold down the left mouse button and drag the unshaded part into the shaded portion. As you move into the shaded area, you will notice a "ghost" image of the unshaded portion moving with the mouse pointer. You will also notice the directory window is not updated as you move. When you release the mouse button, the Scroll Bar's unshaded portion will then move and the display will be updated.

Probably the two most useful features as far as tidying up the Desktop is concerned are the Size Window Box and the Move Bar. To resize the window, place the mouse pointer over the Size Window Box, press and hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse to change the window's dimensions. A ghost window will be displayed, and

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you should use this image to judge the window's resizing. Once you release the mouse button, the actual directory window will shrink or expand to fill the area marked by the ghost window.

Moving a window is similar in execution to resizing -- simply place the mouse pointer over some portion of the Move Bar, press and hold down the left mouse button and move the mouse to move the entire window. As with resizing, a ghost window represents the actual window, which doesn't move until you release the mouse button.

Some Suggestions

Now that you have the basics down, here are some ideas that might be helpful to you in planning your Desktop layout.

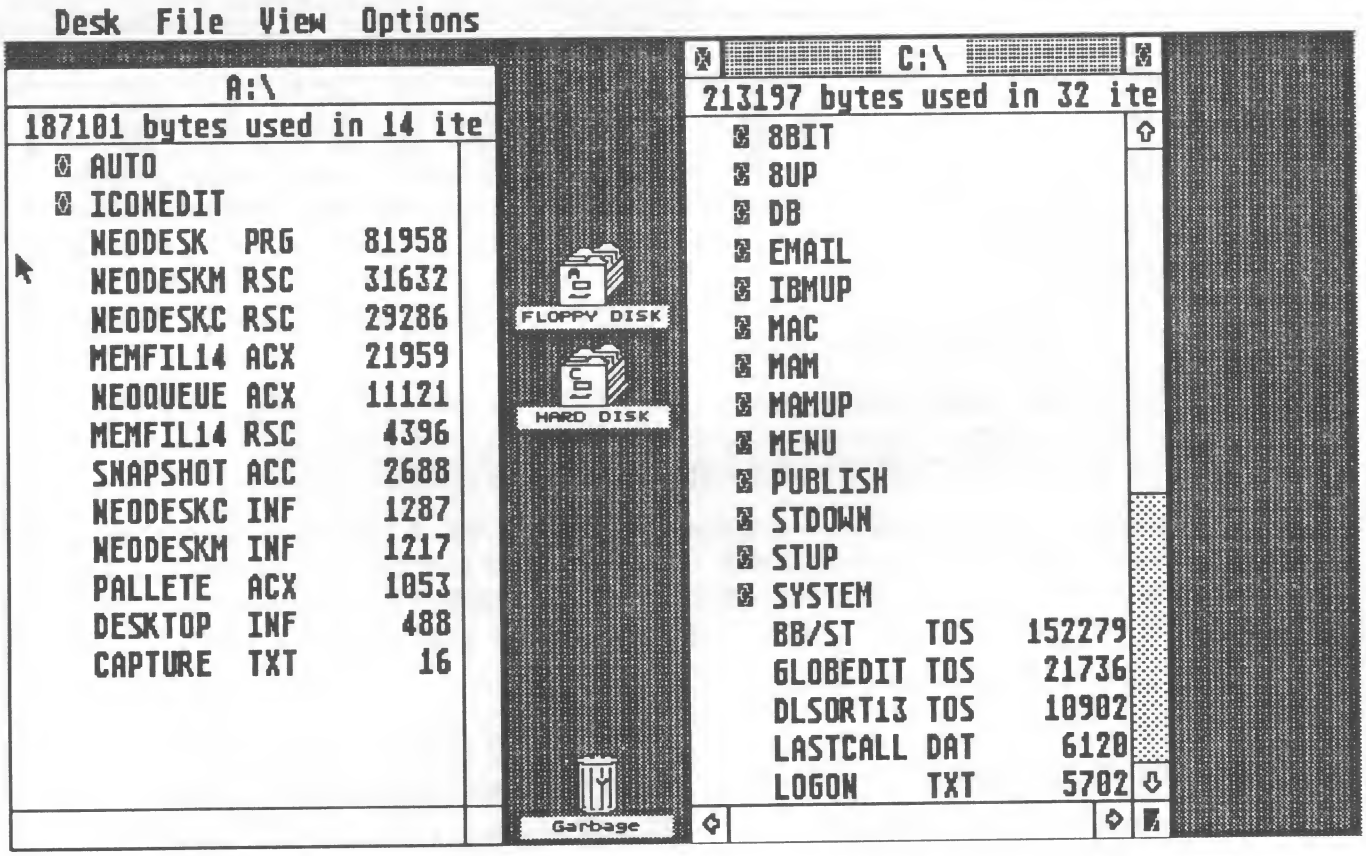
If you have a two drive system, you may want to rename the drive icons to "Disk One" and "Disk Two" or "Top Disk" and "Bottom Disk" to visually represent the way the drives are actually configured. Also, if you have one single and one double sided disk, you may want to add "SD" or "DD" to differentiate the two drives.

On a two drive system, setting up the Desktop as shown below will cut down on the distance you need to move your mouse to select the various icons/windows. This Desktop has two drive icons -- one floppy and one hard drive. Since there is no second floppy connected to the system, the Drive B icon has been removed using the Install Disk Drive entry in the Options menu.

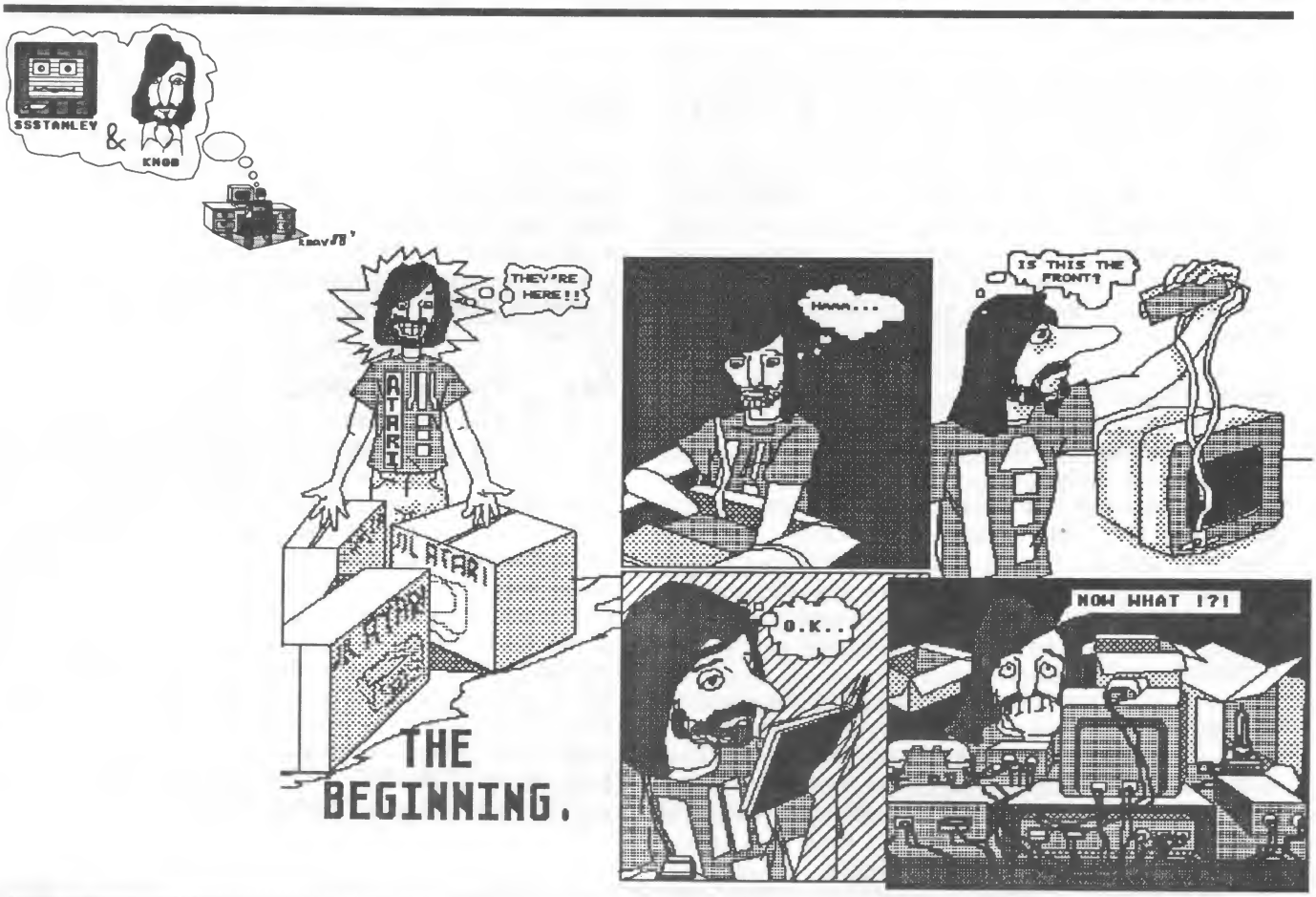
Finally, if children will be using your ST or you just want to make it impossible to inadvertently delete files from your disks, move a directory window directly over the trash icon. Any time you wish to delete a file, you will have to move the directory window out of the way, but your inquisitive 5-year-old won't be able to destroy your software library!

Saving Your Hard Work

Now that you've set up an organized Desktop, let's save it for future use. Make sure you have your "boot disk" in Drive A (use the Language Disk that came with your ST if you don't have a boot disk already) and that the disk is not write-protected. Move the mouse pointer up to the Options menu and click on the "Save Desktop" entry. If you own a newer model ST or a Mega, you will be asked if you really want to save the Desktop; if you own an older ST, you won't be asked. The computer will write a file to the disk called DESKTOP.INF. Now, every time you turn your computer on with this disk in the drive -- or any disk containing a copy of this DESKTOP.INF -- the Desktop will appear exactly as it did when you saved it.



Sample of an ST Desktop Organized for Ease of Access to All Items



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Universal Item Selector 2.0

by Bill and Pattie Rayl

The Universal Item Selector for the ST is one of those indispensable items no STer should be without. A few days ago, Application and Design Software's president, Rod MacDonald, informed us that version 2.0 of the Selector is now available. Here's some of the new version's capabilities:

- Improved "Show Info" that gives all the disk info you could need, and even tells you free memory
- Formats in 9/10 sectors, 80/81/82 tracks
- Faster sort directory routines, including No Sort
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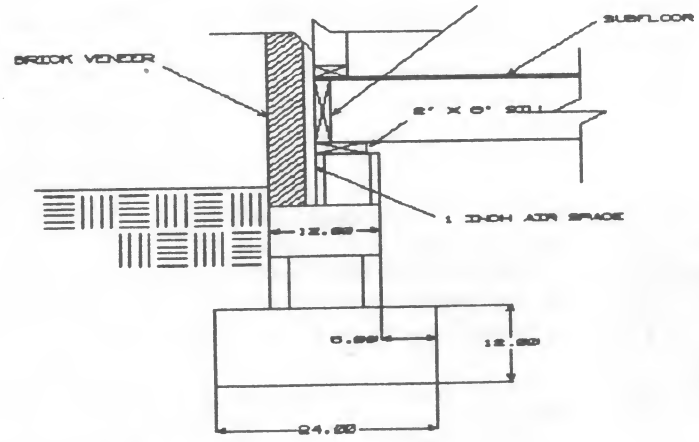

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NeoDesk -- the Alternative Desktop

ST Software Review by Bill Rayl

Every once in a while, a piece of software or hardware comes along that is so useful everyone should own it. NeoDesk is just such a product. Billed as "The Complete Desktop Alternative for all Atari ST Computer Systems," NeoDesk is the closest thing to a perfect GEM desktop available for the 16bit Ataris.

How Close is "Close to Perfect?"

When I first saw a message posted on Delphi by a company called Gribnif Software, I didn't know if NeoDesk was for real or just a late April Fool's joke. The "advertisement" for Gribnif's NeoDesk made a number of claims that seemed plausible enough, but almost everything I'd ever wished for in the ST Desktop was on the list of NeoDesk's features...and then some! The most amazing part was the retail price for making nearly all my ST dreams come true -- an amazingly low $29.95. "C'mon," I thought, "No way this can be for real."

Never being one to give in to skepticism (I'm an optimist at heart -- I'm still a dedicated Atarian!), I decided to call Gribnif. Well, ok, I actually got my wife to do it... To my surprise, someone actually answered (Rick Flashman, author of the manual for NeoDesk and the "Lock and Key for the ST" article that appeared in the April issue of MAM.). Gribnif was for real, or so Rick assured us, and a review copy was on the way.

A couple days and a few hundred "I still don't believe it" later, NeoDesk was delivered to my door. I immediately locked myself away in the computer room, zipped through the 28-page manual, and was up and running in under half an hour. A few hours later, after trying every option in the manual and finding not a single bug or glitch, my previous "I don't believe it's real" became "I can't believe it's so good and only $30!"

Features

What makes NeoDesk so good? First of all, it is a very clean and polished piece of software. The NeoDesktop has a friendlier "feel" than the standard desktop, and when it comes to features, comparing the ST Desktop to the NeoDesktop is like comparing Space Invaders to Dungeon Master! Here are just a few of the things that make NeoDesk a real "gem" of a program:

Program, data and batch file icons can be placed on the NeoDesktop. This is very handy for often-used programs that happen to be in a folder on your disk. Simply drag the icon to your Desktop, and you can run the program without searching three folders deep to get to it each time!

All Drop-down Menu commands have keyboard equivalents.

Floppy disks can be formatted in 79, 80, 81 or 82 sectors/9 or 10 tracks per sector. NeoDesk can also copy/duplicate disks formatted in any of these options -- using the standard Desktop, the ST would crash attempting to copy a whole disk formatted over 80 sectors. Also, if you're in the middle of formatting or copying and decide to do something else, holding down the UNDO key (or Control-C) will abort the format or copy.

The "Show Information" command is much more powerful. When used on a drive, NeoDesk shows statistics like tracks per sector, sectors per disk and even allows you to create or change the disk Volume Name. "Show Information" on a file allows you to set the time/date stamp on the file to the current system date (referred to as "touching").

Selecting a file icon inside a directory window causes a display of the file size in bytes, date stamp and read/write status to appear at the top of the directory (the status or info line). If you select more than one file, the sum of the file sizes appears, taking the guess-work out of trying to copy files to floppy without running out of space.

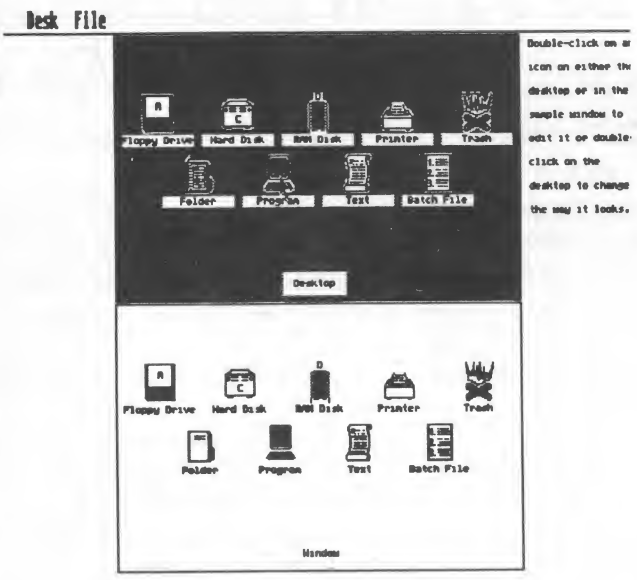
"Sort by Type" does not sort by file extension. Instead, it actually sorts by type -- folders first, followed by executable files (.TOS, .TTP, .PRG, .APP), then data files and finally batch files. There's also a "No Sort" command which shows files in the order that they were physically stored on disk, a very handy feature when having problems with files in an AUTO folder (some programs require they be stored in a specific order in an Auto folder.).

As you've probably guessed by now, NeoDesk supports the use of batch files, including .BTP files (Batch file Takes Parameters). Batch files can be used to automate tedious jobs like copying often used files to a ramdisk or compiling a program. An auto batch file can also be used to automatically execute at system bootup.

Warm and cold system resets can be done by holding down a series of keys, eliminating the need to reach around behind your machine to reboot.

This is not a complete list of all the features in NeoDesk...it's not even *half* of them!

So far, not much has been said here about the NeoDesk icons. NeoDesk supports nine different types of icons, including folders, programs, batch files, data files, a trash icon, a printer icon and three different drive icons -- NeoDesk differentiates between floppy drives, hard drives and ramdisks. An Icon Editor is supplied for customizing



NeoDesk's GEM-Based Icon Editor

these icons to your own individual tastes and preferences. The editor is GEM-based and very easy to use, allowing each icon's "data" (standard) or "mask" (selected or on desktop) shapes. Once you have created or modified icons, you can save them to disk for later use. When loading icons, NeoDesk gives the option of loading individual icons (such as the trash icon) or replacing all icons with those found in the icon file.

There is no way in NeoDesk to view files as text (this will be in the next version, due out this fall). At first, I felt this was a drawback, but the icons are much more useful than the standard icons -- the "tradeoff" is definitely worth it.

Also packaged with the system are a couple accessories from Gribnif. NeoQueue is a printer queue that holds up to 10 files and allows you to change the order of files to be printed or to remove a file if you change your mind. Files are placed in the queue by dragging them to the printer icon.

MemFile is a file/sector/memory editor that lets you poke around inside the ST to see what's going on. MemFile comes with its own documentation on the distribution disk, and has been released into the public domain by Dan Wilga, NeoDesk and MemFile's author. The disk comes with StartGEM, a PD program allowing autoboot of GEM programs at system startup, and COMMAND, a PD command line interpreter. Oh, yea...a copy of Atari's Control Panel is also on the disk, mainly for setting the desktop colors.

The whole program, when installed, takes up 145K of RAM -- a fact which is prominently displayed on the outside of the packaging. If that sounds bad to you, you're obviously not a veteran STer from TOS-on-Disk days! NeoDesk will run perfectly well with 512K, but I don't recommend it. And, if you frequently run memory-intensive programs such as Desktop Publishing packages or Word Perfect on a 1040, NeoDesk may not be very practical for you. At least 1Meg of RAM is recommended by Gribnif. (It would be really nice to see a NeoDesk cartridge!)

Other problems that exist are incompatibilities with the following programs:

CAD3D 2.0 from Antic (all versions up to 2.02) and Graph.Prg from Timeworks overwrite NeoDesk, causing the ST to crash when exiting those programs -- the programs themselves run fine, it is only after exiting that the problem occurs, and the ST should be rebooted when this happens.

The OutPrint or OutPut function of Easy Draw does not execute the output program. Instead, it exits you to NeoDesk where you can run the output program.

Some programs, such as Publishing Partner and ST Writer Elite (v.2.3) mess up the mouse pointer after exiting the program. To work around this, Gribnif has added keyboard commands to send "mouse on" and "mouse off" calls, which will clear up the garbage the mouse pointer leaves on your desktop (mouse droppings?).

Other than the above incompatibilities and the memory usage, there are no drawbacks to this software for the average (or above-average) user. One minor inconvenience is that NeoDesk does not support low resolution on color systems. That means most games can't be run from NeoDesk, but most are autoboot disks anyway, and no one seriously prefers low resolution for everyday usage (no one I know, anyway!).

The only thing I would like to see added in a future update would be the option of individualized icons for executable programs. Under the current NeoDesktop, it shouldn't be too hard to look for a .NIC (NeoDesk Icon) file to correspond with a program and display that icon for that file.

For example, if EasyDraw.Prg had an EasyDraw.NIC in the same directory, NeoDesk could display a personalized Easy Draw icon. If the .NIC file didn't exist, a standard program icon would be used. Though this would no doubt slow the program down a bit, it would be a nice touch, and I hope Gribnif at least makes some attempt at individual icons.

Overall, this software is an exceptional value for the price. Though it may not suit everyone due to the loss of available memory, the trade will be worth it to many others. If it does nothing else, NeoDesk points the way to a truly functional ST Desktop. For this alone, NeoDesk is worth the price.

NeoDesk is available from Gribnif Software, PO Box 350, Hadley, MA 01035, (413) 584-7887. Runs in color or monochrome and is NOT copy protected.

For 520ST, 1040ST, 520STfm and MEGA

MEMORY: Up to Four Megabytes on ONE board, NO SOLDERING!!!

Expand your St's memory to ONE Megabyte, TWO and ONE-HALF Megabytes or even FOUR Megabytes with the tech-specialities plug-in memory modules.

520ST modules use 256K DRAMs for upgrades to 1 MB and 1 Megabit DIPs for 2-1/2 and 4 MB upgrades. All boards are fully socketed and the expandable boards can be configured for either 256K or 1 Mb chips. This means that you can start by upgrading your 520 to one Megabyte and later move up to either 2.5 or even 4 Megabytes--the maximum for any ST, even the Mega! Installation is completely solder-free and comes with detailed illustrated instructions. All upgrades come with a one (1) year limited warranty.

Upgrade your 1040ST or 520STfm just as easily as a 520ST! Send us your 520STfm and we will install the second bank of memory complete for only $198.00 plus shipping. Or install one of our 1040 memory boards and upgrade your ST to 2-1/2 or even 4 Megabytes.

Limited space above the 1040 mother board prohibits the use of conventional sockets in one bank. Optional "ZERO Height" sockets allow you to have this bank socketed too, so you can plug in or exchange the expensive 1 Mbit chips. The "ZERO-Height" socket kit is also available separately so you can install it at any time!

All memory boards fit under the R/F shield. The CPU is completely available for any future enhancements (blitter, coprocessor, etc.). No soldering is required. Upgrade any ST to 2 or 4 MB with no trace cutting and no additional parts except for DRAMs. All boards are also available with an optional realtime clock, and all boards are tested for continuity. Populated boards are tested with chips installed.

520A:	Socketed, no RAM	$129
520B:	1 B, socketed	$269
520C:	2.5 MB, socketed	$745
520D:	4B	$1299
520-1:	1 B, non-expandable	$198
1040A:	1 Bank sockets, no RAM	$110
1040B:	Fully socketed, no RAM	$149
1040C:	2.5 MB + 1 bank sockets	$745
1040D:	4 MB	$1299
1040K:	Kit w/all parts, no RAM	$ 68
	Clock Option on Memory Board	$ 30
	Clock, stand-alone 520/1040	$ 38

Above prices correct on 4-15-88. Prices of populated boards subject to chip adjustments to meet fluctuating DRAM prices.

Host adapter cards come with software and DMA cable.
They can also be supplied with case and 6' round shielded SCSI cable with embedded power supply lines. Max. cable length is 20', additional connec- tors can be installed through mass termination.
Prices after the "/" are for host adapters with case and 6' SCSI cable.

1 port 79/119 full SCSI 119/159

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(713) 590-2068 and 590-3738

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Claremont, Western Australia 6011
Tel.: (09) 385-1765

Canada (East)
Computer Country, Paul Wilson
148 Waterloo Street, Stratford, Ontario,
N5A 4B4 - Tel.: (519) 273-1011

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1. 10" x 6.5" x 15" with full SCS Interface
-150 W PC power supply with fan
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-controller for up to 4 hard drives for limited time only
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No Drives--Install your own			$385
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20 MB	$595	40 MB ST251	$845
40 MB full height high speed			$795

2. 13" x 15" x3.5"with single port host adapter
-ready for to 3 1/2 ht hard disks
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-can be placed under monitor

No Drives--Install your own			$295
10 MB	$395	30 MB	$645
20 MB	$525	40 MB ST251	$795

3. 4.5" wide x 6" high x 13" deep with single port host adapter
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-optional fan available (add $14)

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20 MB	$485	40 MB ST251	$750
40 MB full height high speed			$695

4. Kit for one 3.5" high speed drive with embedded SCSI controller, expansion by daisy chaining additional drives. Uses the least possible space on your desk! Please contact us for specs.

We ship COD ($3) or prepaid, sorry no credit cards!
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h. d. kits with drive need special shock resistant pack. $20
Texas residents add 8% state sales tax.

520ST, 1040ST, 520STfm and MEGA are trademarks of ATARI Corp.

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

CACE

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Jim Boyce	522-4074
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1pm to approx. 4pm. The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson, MI.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitle members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

The meetings take place at the MSU Physics- Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics--Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

Elected and appointed Officers of CHAOS

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	Guy Hurt	484-7675
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8bit Rep	Bill Johnson	675-7166
16bit Rep	Brian Goluska	332-4415
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
Gen. Pub Lib	Innaiah Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord	Mike Fildee	
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

Presidential Address

June is the beginning of the slow season for computer use and computer clubs. It's always a little problem to make it through the summer because attendance and revenue are down, while expenses remain the same. As you go about your summer business, don't forget to stop in at a meeting or two!!

I'd like to thank Mike Fildey for a fine job in coordinating his first ST meeting. Things went very well, and I am thrilled to have a new volunteer helping out. Doug Bell is assisting Mike, so thank them both when you see them.

There are a few things in the offing as I write. The ST SIG is trying to put together a MIDI-Maze party. Guests will be welcome. The time, place and facility are to be determined. Also under consideration is a CHAOS picnic some Sunday afternoon -- maybe here at my home, maybe somewhere else.

Our attendance at the MAXIT show paid for itself. The sponsors and volunteers for MAXIT are quite pleased with this year's results. In the meantime, we and others, are looking at a possible fall Computer Show and Sale. If it happens, it would be a buyer's show with LOTS of discounts and bargains. The Atarian's dream...

Leo Sell

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive (Near Atherton and Hammerburg ro.). During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday workshop at 9:30 a.m. Membership is $15 and includes a subscription to the Michigan Atari Magzine.

Meeting dates

June 8 General meeting

NO meetings in July and August!

Information: Jerry Cross 313-736-4544

FACTS BBS 313-736-3920

8bit Disk Library

Hello Atarians ! Have you stayed in and programmed or did the weather send you fleeing into real world? We did have some rainy days, thus giving me time to put together 4 more library disks for the month. Here is what is new for May.....

Disk #261 This is a Utilities disk. It has MTOS multi tasking operating system. This is only a sample version. It has the ablity to run more than one program (or task) at a time. HDRESTOR.OBJ/HDBACKUP.OBJ A hard disc backup and restore for SpartaDOS. ELEGANT.NLQ/ROMAN.NLQ/SENATOR.NLQ -- These

are Daisy Dot II fonts. PAL.COM -- Read the docs. This is more of an ad for the real program. It sounds like it is well worth the money. If you use the program let me know what for and how you like it.

DISK #262 Games! FORTRESS/FORTRES2 -- Two arcade maze games. The graphics are nice and you bounce off the walls real smooth. WATOR.OBJ -- This is an aquamarine population game. Can you balance the ecology?

DISK #263 CADXE. Computer Aided Drawing -- 3-D drawing program. This is shareware written by David Foster. If you like and use this, it would give GAG a good name to support the programmer. I'm well aware of the work and frustration in writing a good program.

DISK #264 GTERM. Another BBS program. This is called the Evening Star BBS. Boot without basic to autoload. (hold OPTION key and turn on the computer).

New Disks for June....

DISK #265 SECURITY.BAS. This is a well documented program for setting up a computer controlled burglar alarm system for your home or ofice. Requires sensors and other parts to operate, but this is very nicely explained in the docs.

DISK #266 Pinball Games. CREEPSHO.OBJ and BLAKHOLE.OBJ. Test your hand at these fast and furious ball chasers. This needs to be booted without basic and loaded (Option L) from DOS. Good Luck.

I have another modem program ,play BRKOUT while downloading, and more RLE picture (for adults only,id required) disks coming your way also. I just got them and have not had time to set them up yet. There should be quite a list to pick from to keep you busy through the summer months. Come to the June meeting and check them out.

That completes this month's disks. Stay tuned to your local users' group for more to come....Until then live long and program!

Ed Kalush

President's Report

Over the past year we have purchased several pieces of software so GAG members could check them out and try them. The purpose of this was to let the members know what the software was like, so they could decide if they wanted to purchase it. However, this has not been very successfull. It could be up to three or four months before someone could get hands on the package. To correct this problem, it was voted at the last meeting to try something a little different.

We will now be purchasing programs, and give them away to members with one little catch. They must write a review of the program to be published in MAM. This is a small price to pay for free software. I am now looking around for some new software packages to review, and we will start this program in a few months. I will be sending all members a note imforming them of the changes, and getting the necessary information from them if they want to be included in the drawing. This program includes current members only, including our out-of-state members. I will need to know what type of equipment you have access to, so that we don't send an 8bit program to an ST user.

New catalog updates are in the works, and I hope to have them in the mail by mid-June.

There will not be Saturday workshops for June through August because the school will be closed for the summer. Also, the July and August General meeting is canceled. If you need a program from our disk library, you can pick them up at Sy-Draft, located on Corunna Rd between Linden and I-75. If you have any programming problems, contact me and I will get you in touch with someone who can help you out. We have several members who are more than happy to answer questions.

Be sure to read your MAM next month! There should be a whole lot of news items coming from the Consumer Electronics Show. Several representitives from MAM will be going, and we should have a lot of interesting things in store!

That's it for now. I hope you all have a nice summer, and I'll see you in September.

Jerry Cross

GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $20/yr..

President	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer	DaveBryant	
Librarian	Dale Vincent	
Archiver	Dave Oldenburg	
STChairman	Jim Zinke	
SysOp	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616)657-2665	

From the President...

We had 17 members present at May's meeting. We even had a couple of older members present for information about modems to access the BBS on their STs. This is the place to get your information.

We did a demo on Springboard's "NewsRoom," and passed out the flyer for the 09-July-88 Picnic at my home which was done using the NewsRoom program. Those of you that were there now have a road map and information concerning the picnic.

The picnic starts at 10 a.m. and will end on or about 4 p.m.... I will be passing out more flyers at our next meeting 11-June-88, so if you don't have access to someone who has one already, be at our next meeting.

You can bring family or friends. There is a playground area for younger members, and there is cover for all if the weather is on the damp side. Bring a dish to pass, your own plates and silverware, and something to drink. Cooking will be done in the kitchen if anything needs to be heated. I will provide the usual tables, chairs, trash containers and air-conditioning. We hope to see you there.

We had a 520ST at the meeting this time, but not any ST users. I appreciate Alex Stevens (Our SyOp) bring in his system. Dale Vincent joins our staff of officers as Librarian. We hope to complete additional listings of our program library and books and open up new areas for information related to computers.

We looked at the new Analog format in issue #61. It appears that most of our members are impressed with it as well as the content. We received a program listing for

the Boston Atari Users Group. Our librarians will go over the files to look for anything new or unusual.

The BBS was down for three days last week due to a power supply failure. This is the second one to fail since we started last July. They were both the older type of supplies without vent holes. Mine is currently being used, but I think we will be building one of our own soon. This will also allow us to put in a DC back-up to prevent us from shutting down during power failures. We also have the extra IBM drives installed. so now there are 4 disk drives and a RAM Disk. We are starting to get really professional.

Dave Bryant has been working on his own BBS, and I was able to see several of his menus that he uses. I was greatly impressed, and I think we will be able to use some of his menus on the GKAUG BBS...We are still looking for new title screens for the BBS. We used the "ANIMATOR" program for the one currently in use, and it is available for those of you that wish to have your title screen used on the BBS.

Next Meeting:

1. Analog Disks #59,60,61
2. Demo Font Craft by PineCraft Ent.
3. Librarian Task Force Agenda
4. Last Planning scheduled for picnic
5. Confirmation of July/August as Summer Break for GKAUG

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS' — MICHIGAN'S Oldest 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

General meeting: First Thursday (every month) 6 p.m. until 9:00. Meeting at: Athens High School, Troy, MI., Room 1506, 4333 John R, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile Rd.)

From the Desk of the President

Ahhh, Spring...sure makes it hard sometimes to get one's duties done. I was going to write, about I'm not sure what, until I downloaded a text file from a local BBS (you were at the last meeting weren't you?), read it, and found myself calling the Gribnif Software company in Hadley, Maine to ask about a new program from them called NEODESK.

Well sir, next thing I knew I was giving them my Visa number to have them send a copy of the program, all in the interest of the club, of course! I will be demoing it and writing a review for the Michigan Atari Magazine, but want to share a little information about it now. Editable (not edible) Icons; all menu items have keyboard equivalents; GEM rubberband box can be pulled in any direction; windows can have search templates like *.PRG to show only certain files; seven windows open at once instead of the usual four; file copying via memory buffer reduces disk swaps on single drive systems (like having an automatic ram-disk); disk erase by pulling Icon to Trashcan; multiple format methods; windows size themselves to the contents; runs batch files; both cold and warn restarts from desktop and much more than this.

Maybe you can understand why I ordered it, and there is a price break for user groups ordering three or more packages. The program retails for $29.95 but we can get it for $24.95 -- not a great break but not bad. So, watch for the demo and review. Like Byron Johnson said in his May article in MAM regarding ST-Turbo and Universal File Selector, "I think I'm beginning to see a trend here." The ST lives in spite of Atari!

Anyone interested in Word Perfect until they saw the price should look on the back page of ST Informer's May issue. Also, the May/June issue of Atari Explorer ran two reviews of WP, a pro and a con opinion. Congratulations, that is one of the finest and fairest review situations I've seen! I have WP, and noticed the reviewers were using older versions (I have ver. 4.1, 15 April 1988) and even the negative reviewer still had some good thing to say about it. I am terribly pleased with mine! Do believe the bugs are gone now, I can't seem to find any.

Hopefully, as you read this you will also be aware of the new GLASS Public Domain Library catalogs at the General Meeting. We got really tired of stapling the sheets to the wall every month and have used enough staples to build a YUGO GT! So, yours truly burnt the midnight oil creating the catalog. I really feel bad about asking $1.00 per copy but it's for the club to get another computer for demos. I've noticed that a lot of members haven't taken advantage of the library, and it's mostly because the wall-sheets were a little cryptic, so check out some of the great pd software! Oh yes, addition (read update) sheets are free to every one and are available at General Meetings. If you would like a catalog mailed to you, send a check or money order for $2.50 to cover postage to our club address below.

I wish to acknowledge the members who have been especially helpful in assisting with their own equipment, help at General Meetings, and attendance at Planning Meetings. Jim Barnhart, who has been bringing in his 1040 keyboard for the last several months so we could have a third computer at meetings. Drew Soloman, a relatively new member, who has been attending Planning Meetings, helped with set-up and tear-down of the General Meetings. Mike Gillie (P.R. Officer), who graces us with his wit and knowledge in the demos and seminars (and supports us on the Cosmic STomper BBS, the "in" place for modem users!). Todd Meitzner (Librarian), who diligently attends to the library and has provided a monitor at critical times. Ken Settle (long-time member and club tekkie), who doctors our equipment and brings computer components when needed. Byron Johnson (Vice-prez.), for his help with the newsletter and bringing in his Indus-GT double-sided drive every month. Whew, I didn't realize the list was going to be so long, and I've just begun. Guess I didn't realize until just now how much this group has become a second family to me! Darn, there I go getting sentimental (sniff, sniff...).

To you members who haven't been able to make it to some of the meetings, you have been missed (and you have missed some good times and give-aways).

Well, I'm getting a little long-winded and have used up one and a half pages of computer screen so I will close for this month. We are always interested in your letters complaint, question, and information to the editor, so drop us a line to... GLASS, PO Box 99737, Troy, Mi 48099.

Steve Mileski

M.A.C.E. Journal

GRASS Meeting: July 6, 1988, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W., Time: 6:30 P.M.

George Nosky	President/Treasure	(616)942-1527
2440 Parkridge Dr. S.E.Grand Rapids, Mi. 49506		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616)957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Membership Chair	(616)784-6230

President's Comments

GRASS extends a hardy welcome to new members Len Brothers and Bruce Robey, both of Wyoming. We also welcome back Jeff Nemic and Al Taylor who renewed their memberships at the May meeting.

A brief discussion was held on whether to hold meetings during the summer months. It was the unanimous vote of the members present to meet throughout the summer. I think this is good for the Club. We will continue to schedule demonstrations of various types. We probably won't have any more raffles until the fall--or do you want some sooner? Let us know.

Chuck Baughman did a fine job of domonstrating 221B Baker Street. After Chuck finished, we raffled it off. John Dunn, who joined us a couple of months ago, was the winner. Congratuations John!

Tim Feenstra kept everyone's eyes glued to the projection screen with his demo of Carrier Force. I can see how you can get hooked on a game like that. Tim says it can take 50 to 100 hours to complete a game. It looked fun.

The big news for the Club was our Atari Fair held May 14th. "Unfortunately" for us the weather was great. It was a warm spring day and there were several major events going on. Put that all together and we ended up with a light turn out. It didn't seem to dampen the spirits of our members who did a super job working the Fair. I asked a number of people at the end if they wanted to do this again. Everyone said "yes".

Next time we should try February or November when people are hunting for something to do. Anyway, the Fair was a *big* success. We picked up new members, sold software and helped people with their systems. Gerry Borysiak joins me in thanking the people who duplicated disks, made banners, organized refreshments, greeted guests, cleaned up the room and lent moral support.

These people are: Chuck Baughman, Charlene Bird, Bob Bulliment, Brian Draper, John Dunn, Tim Feenstra, Steve Gilbert, Mark Haaksma, Gary Heitz, Wayne Moose, Heather Nosky, Chris Pelton, Con Scooros, Dean Streb and his mother, Marvin and Connie Waid, Greg Williams and Lonnie Zamarripa. I hope I didn't forget anyone. If I did, I apologize.

Greg Williams is bringing his ICD Multi I/O to the June meeting. This "box" and SpartaDos X really add flexibility and power to the 8Bit. I will put this on Steve Gilbert's BBS so you will have it before the June meeting. See you at the July meeting.

George Nosky

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive MAM as part of the $20 annual dues, and may attend monthly meetings the third Tuesday of each month at the Southfield Civic Center. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. Eightbit and ST disks are $5 each. The ST sig meets on the first Tuesday of the month. If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from the library.

Meeting Minutes

The May meeting was the annual birthday celebration. MACE is now seven years old! Don Neff showed a Birthday demo by Shawn Cassidy of the Windsor Atari User Group. Don announced library disks would be available at discounted prices for this evening in celebration of the 7th birthday.

There have been no submissions of artwork for the MACE Logo contest. Members should see Heather Neff for details. The purpose is to come up with a logo for the club's section of MAM.

Pattie Snyder-Rayl discussed an amendment to the Constitution allowing non-members to buy disks. (See attached.) The members decided that the normal $5 rate for disks is high and authorized the officers to evaluate the price. Members will vote on the amendment at the July meeting.

It has been six months since MACE joined the MAM "family," so discussion of whether to maintain affiliation was held. Member Mike Lechkun said MAM has received glowing reviews from Computer Shopper for two consecutive months. Comments seemed to center on the loss of MACE's unique identity in contrast to the old MACE Journal. Don noted again very few members are submitting articles for publication so they have no one to blame but themselves for this. There were no dissenting votes in the referendum to maintain affiliation.

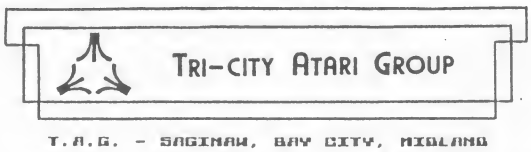
The MACE Ace Award was presented to ex-President Tom Sturza for keeping MACE alive during turbulent times 18 months ago. As Don put it, "If not for Tom, we wouldn't be here tonight." Tom received a round of applause. Sharie Middlebrook, SysOp (Wizop!) of MACE WeST, was presented a Thank You card and a dozen roses for her continuing effort. Sharie's endless well of support for our club is greatly appreciated.

The second half of the meeting was Swap Night while soft drinks and cake were served. Jim Kennedy presided over the drawings for door prizes.

Michael Olin

Amendment to the MACE Constitution

That Section D be changed to read "The 8bit disk librarian shall be responsible for maintaining the public domain 8bit disk library and related documentation, as well as, copying and distributing library disks. He/She may sell these disks to non-members at a higher price than charged to members." and "The 16bit librarian shall be responsible for maintaining the public domain 16bit disk library and related documentation, as well as, copying and distributing library disks. He/She may sell these disks to non-members at a higher price than charged to members." Final discussion and vote will take place at the July meeting.



The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: June 11, 1988 & July 16, 1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	8bit Disk lib.	790-1980
Neil Demo	ST Disk Lib.	792-0311

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bits and ST's, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8-bit disks and 50 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1.00 each, and ST disks cost $2.00 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

The President Speaks Out

I'm going to miss my first meeting in some time, so Marty will have to run the meeting in June. I'm heading up north for some sun and fun and (groan) the wife won't let me take my computer! Any way, I expect you all to carry on with your normal vim and vigor... See you all in July!

Hot Flashes from the Future!

Coming in June, the STers will get a chance to see a new game called Empire, donated to TAG by Interstel. John Zekeman will demo Empire, and Al Jennings will demo Dungeon Master, the number one seller from FTL! On the 8bit side, the adventure group will be showing some of the stuff they've got done, and they will be discussing goodies to come in the future! Show up and join in the fun.

RelicST to Relish

The meeting started out with nominations for the coming elections in June. Somehow I got nominated for president again, even though I offered double my current president's salary to anyone willing to take up the torch! (I guess no one is interested in 2 x $0.00!) Marty Schmidt got nominated for the office of treasurer, and once again he is a shoe in. The only office that offers anyone a chance to vote is ST disk librarian. Here we have the choice of two-month incumbent Neil Demo against the ex-eightbitter Al Jennings! Boy, that should bring a lot of mud slinging! Ted Beauchamp was nominated for the office of 8bit disk librarian and Piece's of Eight columnist, and Char Davis was nominated as 8bit meeting coordinator. Show up in June and help these new nominees get voted into office.

Once the meeting split up, the first ST demo began. Al Jennings demoed Spectrum512, and he didn't do his homework (tsk, tsk, tsk)! The program packs a lot of power (I know, I own it!) but you couldn't tell with the demo. The demo ended when Marty voted it as the "Worst Demo" in TAG history. But really Al, we know that you've been busy moving into a new house, and we were just having some fun!

Tom Wheeler then demoed Quantum Paintbox, a graphics program that allows you display 4096 colors at once on the screen! Tom said that only two things he didn't like about the program were the copy protection (you look up a word in the manual) and the method used for drawing. Instead of simply selecting a color from a palette and drawing (like in Spectrum) you have to plan your picture and set up multiple palettes of colors which will only be used on certain portions of the screen.

LeRoy Valley finished up with a nice disk full of utilities which included ARCshell II 1.91, Desk Manager 2.0 (a hard disk boot utility), PM Cataloger (a utility to print out graphics from your Print Master libraries), and his NX-1000 printer accessory, developed on Laser-C.

Pieces Of Eight

The subject of this month's meeting was drawing programs. First Nelson Green demoed RAMbrandt from the Antic Catalog. The program has five different modes which give various resolutions, and numbers of colors. The maximum number of colors is sixteen. The user has the option of using the keyboard, joystick or touch tablet. The program supports the Koala Pad or the Atari Touch Tablet. When finished, the save command allows you to save ten pictures to a disk. The disk operation seemed unusually slow. Also after saving the picture we were not able to get the program to reboot.

The next demo was of a program out of Analog called BBK Artist. This is a machine language program which uses two screens to design displays. The first screen is a menu screen. By using the joystick, you pick the function you want to do, then the program switches you to the second screen where you actually draw the art. When you are ready for a different function you simply press option to get back to the menu.

Next the eight bitters discussed starting to design a text adventure. We looked at several articles Char brought in on designing an adventure game. She also had a program called The Wizard which helps you construct a game. This looked quite interesting, but, since the real purpose is to learn a little about Basic, it was decided to try and dissect a Basic Program to see how they do it. One candidate for the operating table was Nightshade which is a fairly short text adventure from Analog written by Clayton Walnum.

For next month, the decision was for everybody interested create a scenario and draw up a twenty-room map with some ideas of objects to use in the game. The group will then decide the best one to use and start writing a story line.

8bit Equipment Volunteers

Club	800 XL
Nelson Greene	Monitor
Ted Beauchamp	Computer

ST Equipment Volunteers

Tom Wheeler	1040ST
Bryant Lafreniere	Monitor

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. PLEASE, if you're going to be late, or can't make it, CALL!! It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

The Washtenaw Atari Users' Group! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm. Meetings are held at State Street Computer in downtown Ann Arbor. Membership fees are $15 per year; 8bit disks cost $2 and 16bit disks are $3. When you come to a meeting, please bring a chair if you wish to sit down during demos.

General Meeting 5/10/88

This meeting was about "Hack & Slash" which dealt with getting into things like disks and computers and modifying them. Mike Pieronek showed some of the tools provided in the SpartaDOS Toolkit for the 8bit machines, as well as describing the wonders of SpartaDOS itself (very similar to the MS-DOS used on IBM PC's). The disk/sector editor from this toolkit is very good in that it can automatically follow the sectors of a given file through the disk, and it will also work on a hard drive; however, most of the features of this editor will not work on non-SpartaDOS disks. The last item of interest for the 8bits was the showing of a detailed video on how to install the RamMaster 256K memory upgrade.

For the ST, Bill Rayl demonstrated a new utility called 'Neodesk.' This program replaces the GEM desktop with a similar desktop environment that has *many* more features, including batch file support, up to 7 windows open at once, the ability to pull an icon from a window and leave it out on the desktop for easier access, and many more. Craig Harvey showed a public domain disk/sector editor for the ST called DLII. This is still a preliminary version of this program, but it was written by the author of Uniterm and is a very complete utility.

Business

The president reminded us the officer elections will be held at the June meeting, and, to give the new officers something to get started with, the topics of the July and August meetings have been set as Programming Languages (July) and Hardware Projects (August). Besides election night, the June meeting will also be a flea market (swap meet), so bring any hardware and commercial software that you want to sell, and don't forget some money to satisfy your own desires! Also, don't forget that the meetings are being held at State Steet Computer these days.

Craig Harvey

From The Prez...

The June meeting of WAUG is going to be one of the most important meetings of the year, and I encourage all members to make a special effort to attend. The election of new officers is a task that should not be taken lightly as it will, obviously, directly affect the future of our club. There are many members in our midst who are quite capable of taking on some of the duties/responsibilities of running WAUG, and I am anxious to see a strong showing of volunteers. In the past several months, it has become increasingly evident the general membership needs to become more actively involved in planning and orchestrating club meetings. This has to happen soon lest the core group of staunch supporters suffers Classic Burn-Out Syndrome, and it definitely has to happen before a feeling of "someone else will do it" takes hold.

Looking back on the past year, (Where did the time go? Seems like just yesterday we were scrambling to make plans for the Atari Magic Show!) I ran across my first "From the Prez" article and was pleased to note the accomplishment of some of the goals the officers defined in their first meeting: 1) an increase in membership from 40 to 70+, 2) the purchase of club-owned hardware, and 3) additional exposure so that Atarians in southeastern Michigan would have the opportunity to know that we exist.

I am most grateful to all the persons who helped in any way to make these forward strides possible, and special thanks to all the officers who worked so hard and gave so much of their personal time.

In closing, I would like to make the usual plea that has come to be expected from computer club presidents. The future of this organization is inextricably tied to the continuing active involvement of its members. Anything you can do that might help your fellow Atarian better understand his/her equipment is information worth sharing. Be it a demo, an article for the Newsletter, a few hours of time helping an officer in the performance of his/her duties, or a suggestion on how to improve the club, your help is always appreciated and actively solicited.

Michael Olin

Software Engineering Glossary of Product Terminology

New	Different colors from previous version.
All New	Software is not compatible with previous version.
Exclusive	We're the only one who has documentation.
Unmatched	Almost as good as the competition.
Design Simplicity	Developed on a shoestring budget
Foolproof Operation	All parameters are hard-coded.
Advanced Design	Upper management doesn't understand it.
It's Here at Last	Released a 26-week project in 48 weeks.
Field Tested	Manufacturing doesn't have a test system.
High Accuracy	All the directories compare.
Years of Development	Finally got one to work.
Unprecedented Performance	Nothing ever ran this slow before.
Revolutionary	Disk drive go round and round.
Breakthrough	It finally booted on the first try.
Futuristic	It will only run on a next generatin supercomputer.
No Maintainance	Impossible to fix.
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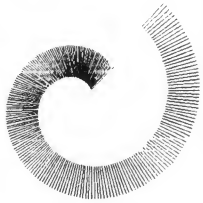

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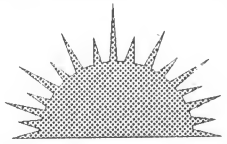

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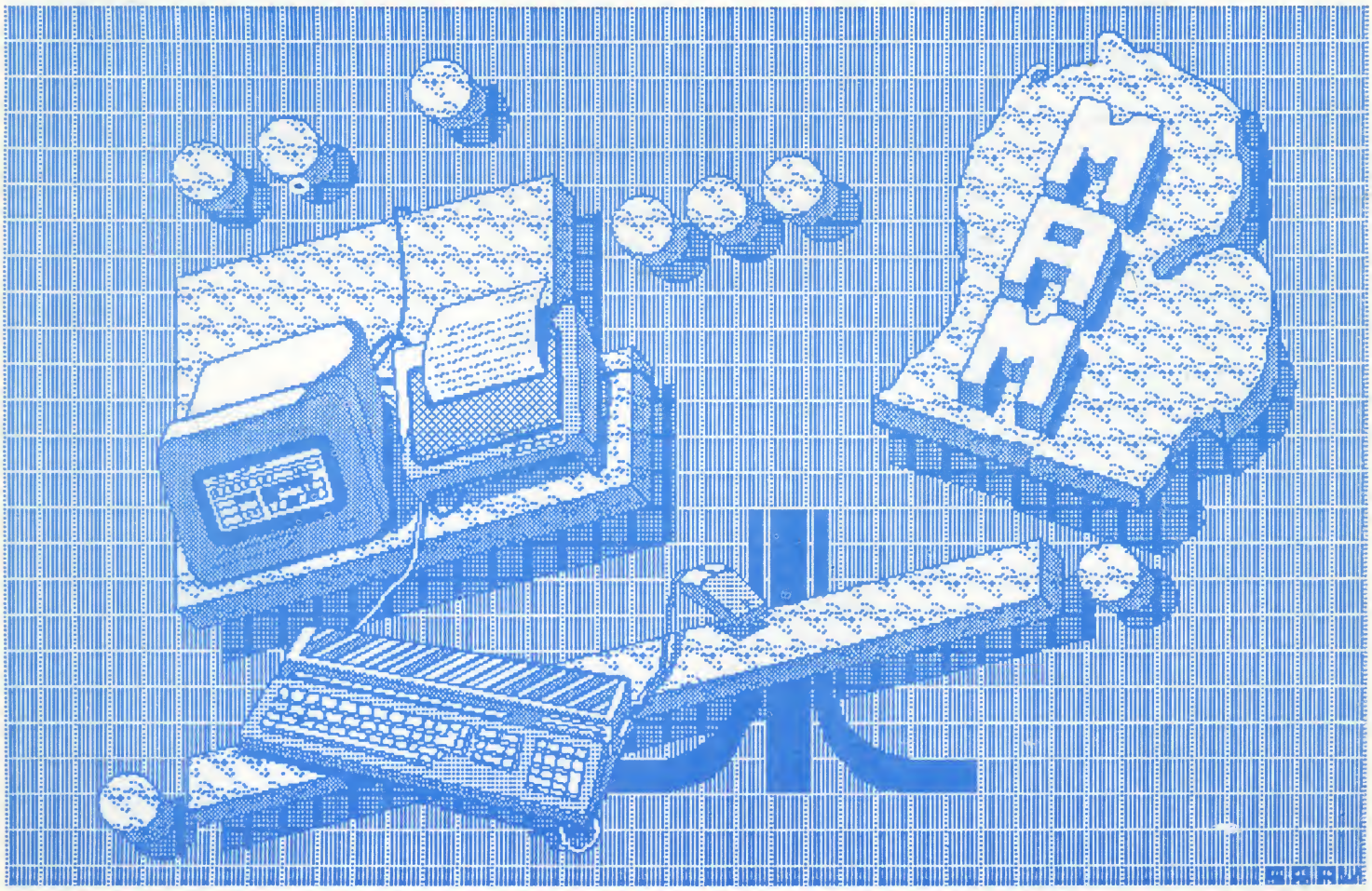

In This Issue:

Summer CES Report
Indiana Jones and the 1200XL
Reviews of QuickCode, GFA Basic training, Modula-2 Commercial version, Macro Mouse, SwitchBack

and MORE ...

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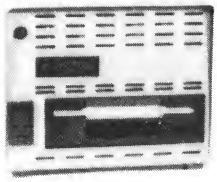

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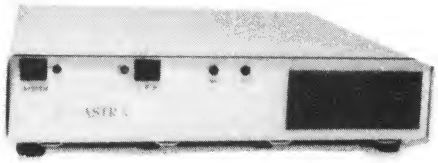

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Features

Editorial Ramblings	2
From the Reader's Viewpoint	3
Atari News and Comment	4
TDI Modula-2 Commercial Version (ST)	6
Scientists and Third Graders	8
QuickCode -- Programmer's Library (8bit)	10
Craig Schaff's Help 'n' Tips (8bit)	11
GFA BASIC Training (ST)	12
Summer CES Report	14
Bowling League Secretary (8bit)	16
Indiana Jones and the 1200XL (8bit)	17
MACRO Mouse from Charles Johnson (ST)	19
Stanley and Knob	21
New 8bit Software	22
ST Notes: SwitchBack from Alpha Systems	26
Last Hacks	32

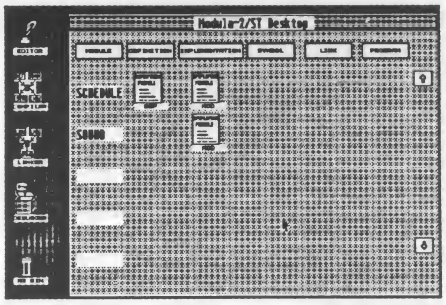
Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	29
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	29
GAG	(Flint, MI)	30
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	30
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	30
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	30
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	31
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	31
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	31

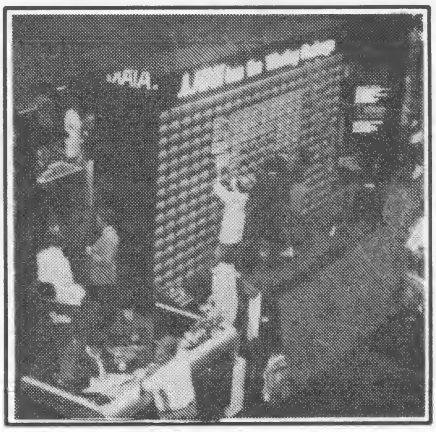
Advertisers

Omega Soft	5
Soft Trek	5
Mars Merchandising	8
Tech Specialities	9
Avalon Hill Game Company	11
State Street Computer	13
Terrific Corporation	13
Practical Solutions	13
Brad Roltgen Enterprises	16
Word Perfect Corporation	18
Gribnif Software	20
United Computer	21
Irrata Verlag	23
MIcroTyme	25
Alpha Systems	28
Unicorn Publications	32
Astra Corporation	Inside Front Cover
Migraph, Inc.	Inside Back Cover
Best Electronics	Back Cover

Volume 3, No. 7 July/August 1988

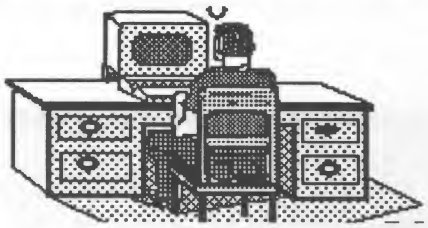


TDI's Modula-2
Commercial Version Pg.6



Summer Consumer
Electronic Show pg. 14

Stanly & Knob pg. 21



Editorial Ramblings

We're back! We only took one month off, but it definitely wasn't all fun and relaxation.

First, you should notice a few changes to the style of the magazine. Of course, we've been making small changes to MAM for months now, but we're finally getting to the point where the magazine *physically* matches the style we believe MAM should have.

We have also planned a number of topic-oriented issues of MAM, starting with this month's issue focusing on Programming. Future topics include Desktop Publishing, Business and Home Productivity, Entertainment and Telecommunications.

Speaking of telecommunications, MAM has officially gone on-line on Delphi, where Analog/ST-Log runs the Atari forums. Now, you can download past articles from MAM on Delphi, leave us mail there or even send us reviews via Delphi's mail facility (our ID is UnicornPub). For info on how to sign up for Delphi, give them a call at 1-800-544-4005. See ya there!

Finally, it seems a number of people were upset with the "reply" that was printed in the June issue's Reader's Viewpoint. We can see how some of you misconstrued it to be an attack on the person who wrote the letter, so we're going to clear it all up here and now.

The letter and the reply to the letter were *both* written by Gordon Totty, the author of the Strip Poker review that sparked the letter to begin with. Believe us, Gordon, your letter certainly has caused a lot of comment! There was even mention of it in a recent Zmag issue. And to think that a few months ago you were saying that you never get any feedback about your articles!

Bill and Pattie Rayl

PS. MAM celebrated its second birthday in July. We're come a long way in two years and special thanks are in order for all the individuals and clubs that have made MAM possible. Maybe next year we'll throw a party...what do you all think?

People Who Make It All Possible

Managing Ed: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Comic Strip: Steve Volker
Contributors: Chris Miller, Paul Walkowski, Jerry Cross, Craig Harvey, Gary Ferris, Craig Schaff, Sally & Frank Nagy, Clinton Pierce, Bill Kane, Frank Fellheimer, John Nagy, Byron Johnson, LeRoy Valley and the participating user groups.

What We Are

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From the Reader's Viewpoint

Dear Editor, MAM

Another issue of the Michigan Atari Magazine has arrived in my mail; probably the last as my subscription is running out. But, even though I have defected to buying that "other machine" whose name almost rhymes with Mega, I have a lingering interest in the Atari world and will probably get this for several more issues.

My first comment goes back to the April issue, to that month's installment of "Learning Telecommunications Bit by Bit." In this article, I find a disparaging attack on an old friend of mine -- my MPP modem. Unlike Jerry Cross, I find the modem and software to be of excellent value. The handler file required to run this modem, at a size of 12 or 17 SD sectors, is not huge, and I got this to work with almost every terminal program I patched it to, including HomeTerm and all the Amodems I could find.

As for the SmartTerm terminal software cartridge supplied with the modem, after dabbling with Amodem and Express, this was the terminal program I came back to because of its speed and features, including its huge internal buffer(s) and modem break capability (necessary for Merit use and not found on the others). As for the modem itself, it compares favorably to its two main competitors, the Atari XM301 and 1030. Unlike the XM301, the MPP does not terminate the serial chain on the 8bit Atari (I never owned an XM301 because I could not use my printer and an XM301 at the same time). Like the XM301 and unlike the 1030, the MPP autoanswers. I have seen relatively crash free BBSes running on MPP modems, back in the days when there were 300 baud BBSes. If you can only afford a 300 baud modem and you can do without the XM301's touchtone capability, then an MPP might be the way to go.

Most importantly, the MPP and the Atari 1030 modems allow what appears to be the most inexpensive way for anyone to get online with any system. With a $25 minimal-style Atari 8bit system and an MPP or 1030, both with software in ROMs, for around $25, all a user needs is a TV and a phone line and he/she can call telecommunication systems. No disk drives or printers are needed.

The cover of MAM: You know, this is supposedly the *Michigan* Atari Magazine. If you are ever going to get subscribers in the Upper Peninsula, it might do well to include the rest of the state in the upper left hand corner of the cover.

The Contents page: looking sharper and sharper, but I still think a paragraph describing the ST hardware/software setup used to make this mag belongs here with the other information.

A suggestion: how about a page or two of the best comments found on the Treasure CheST BBS, sort of like the Bix excerpts printed in BYTE magazine?

The ads: People seem to be doing better at this, but even in the June issue, United Computer neglected to put the area code on the phone number in its ad. Not everyone in the state knows that United Computer in Canton is in the 313 area code, and readers in other states probably have no idea, so please, *all* advertisers (including United, Computer Emporium, Basic Bits and Bytes, Sector One), remember to put complete phone numbers and addresses in ads. This will help increase accessibility, and the interested reader won't have to call Information or look up ZIP codes in order to contact you. You do want to be easy to get a hold of, don't you?

Enough for now! Keep up the good work!

Chris Miller

Chris,

Your comments to the advertisers are very good ones, and we have been requesting that they supply complete addresses and phone numbers. This info really does benefit all involved. As for your other comments, we've done a few changes this issue and one of them is to add the system software info you suggest!

Bill

Dear Editor,

I have some questions about 8bit picture formats and I hope one of your readers can help me.

What are the differences and similarities between the different file formats for Atari 8bit pictures? Are there any "leading bytes" or sectors that tell you what kind of file you have? How do I file a standard 64 sector file picture to disk and then how can I load it in again? Thanks for your help,

Paul Walkowski

Paul,

Graphics Transformer from Alpha Systems allows loading/converting of various 8bit picture formats and Basic TurboCharger (also from Alpha) has source code for converting graphics. I'm definitely not very familiar with the different file formats. Anyone out there able to help more?

Bill

Dear MAM,

It has long been a custom for the Chicago Atari club, CLAUG, to help Atari set up and man the booth at CES. In exchange, Atari execs are escorted by limo to a special CLAUG meeting/dinner and do some serious public relations like answer questions and discuss Atari products. This year Atari showed how much it plans to support user groups – the top brass did not show up! This is partly understandable since many had a meeting with the folks of Children's World, a large toy store chain. The rest of the Atari folks (and many 3rd-party brass too) decided to take advantage of free baseball and rock concert tickets. This made for a very short, boring dinner for the people who gave up their night and paid cold cash to attend the special CLAUG meeting! The only Atari Rep to show up answered only a few questions and then left for another appointment. So much for Atari support.

I also found out about another Atari snub to user groups. Months ago Atari agreed to help the local Chicago Atari clubs to host an AtariFest this year. The one planned for 1987 was cancelled for a number of reasons. At first Atari promised to attend and help pay for the show. Well, as months passed, AtariFest planners could not get Atari to commit to attending and the promised seed money never surfaced. (Does this all sound strangely familiar folks?). Well, AtariFest planners decided to put their foot down and set a deadline. That deadline passed with no money from Atari, so the Chicago show was cancelled again!

I guess we will hear the same excuse about not advertising when there is no product to sell, but the folks in Chicago (and the Midwest) deserved to have this show! There are lots Atarians who would love to attend a show and get their first look at the new Atari products, even if they have to wait to buy them. As for the excuse that these types of shows are not worth the time, why are Commodore and Apple going through the trouble of putting on their own shows?

One more note. Not long ago there was a swap/trade show held in Lansing. Many local user groups were present, as were local vendors. This was not a major trade show or event, but Commodore sent out a representative to answer questions in the local Commodore club's booth. When was the last time you heard of an Atari Rep doing this? Atari, please get your act together before you loose the last few dedicated Atari fans you have!

Jerry Cross, President, GAG

Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by Bill Rayl

Quite a bit has happened in two month, so let's jump right in...

Chuck Babbit, Tony Gould and a number of others at Atari have walked. Atari's official reason for this is that Babbit and Gould were "temporarily" hired and their contracts "expired." Hmm...how many big companies do you know temporarily hire a president and vice president of sales? Doesn't it seem Atari would have announced them as temporary employees when the positions were originally filled?

With the flow of Atari computers to mail-order folks shut down, many areas of the country are finding it nearly impossible to get machines. Atari is reportedly working hard to better relations with existing dealers, but nothing has been said about encouraging new dealers. At the same time, dealers in areas with Federated stores have been complaining. It seems the Federated stores are well-stocked while the area dealers are begging for machines. (In Current Notes, a report by Lee Isgur, First Vice President of Paine-Webber, estimates demand for Atari products currently exceeds supply by *at least* 50 percent.)

With Atari not shipping as many machines as stores have been requesting, a "grey-market" seems to be developing. Some dealers in Canada and Australia, who are having no problems getting stock, have been approaching some US dealers with offers to supply the machines that Atari US isn't shipping. If this grey-market has sufficient time to develop, Atari could have real problems with getting a strong dealer network organized. Of course, the way Atari can fight is keeping the dealers stocked. We've been hearing for months Atari is planning to build a plant or two here in the US to help supply the US market. In the July issue of ST Informer, Houston, Texas is named as the site for the first plant while Current Notes says it may be built somewhere in New England. Other sources claim California, Arizona or Nevada will be home to the plant. Atari has been every tight-lipped about the whole thing, as the following excerpt from a recent Delphi conference demonstrates:

.Pattie>Well, how about the Texas plant that was discussed in Informer?

.Neil> Nothing to confirm on that one Pattie...yet.

.Neil> When there's an announcement to make, I'll be more than happy to talk.

In the June issue of MAM, I reported Atari may be shipping 520STfms with double-sided drives soon. Well, it seems a shipment of DS drive-equipped machines reached a Federated store in mid-July. An Atari dealer in that local area received a shipment a short time later and was shocked to find only single-sided drives in his order.

The dealer complained to his Atari rep. and was told the DS drive machines were meant for Germany and were mistakenly sent to Federated. Hmmm.... wonder why the computers had US ROMs, keyboards and power supplies?

One final note about Atari itself, our first ST (one of the original ones produced in 8/85) finally died after over two years of nearly 24-hour daily service. Rather than pay $40+ to get it fixed locally, we decided to send it back to Atari (with $95) for replacement. (After all, it was missing the new MMU chip which would have cost us $30, etc.) We received our replacement ST in just under three weeks. Not bad, Atari. I've listed Atari's return policy and prices elsewhere in this issue.

The long-awaited Publishing Partner Professional has finally been released -- sort of. Soft-Logik Publishing has released the program with "more bugs than we are comfortable with." The accompanying list of bugs include not being able to use DOC files from previous versions of Publishing Partner, not being able to paste graphics into a document and various other minor and not-so-minor problems. The manual which was shipped with this release is also incomplete, with only sections 1 and 5 supplied. The program itself looks good, but until the bugs are fixed, the program isn't very useful. I've gotten the program to lock or crash nearly every time I've run it.

QMI's ST-Talk Professional has also been released, though it has several bugs too. Depending on who you speak to at QMI, the

manuals are done and the software has a few bugs or the software is in final form but the manual is unfinished. Either way, I'm still waiting for my copy -- I've been waiting since November of 1986!

On a brighter side, a GDOS replacement program is on the way. Charles Johnson of Arcshell and MacroMouse fame (among others!) is about to release G-Wiz which is reported to have improved speed and memory usage over the old GDOS from Atari. Charles says the program has been tested with WordUp, Timeworks Publisher, CAD 3D, EasyDraw, etc, with no incompatibilities whatsoever. If you use any program that currently uses GDOS, $34.95 for G-Wiz will definitely be money well spent! More on G-Wiz next month.

ReeveSoft's Diamond should be released by the time you read this. Diamond is a Gem-like interface for the 8bit. Diamond will come with Diamond Draw, Diamond Write and Diamond Publish. It should be interesting to see how GOE from Merrill Ward and Diamond stack up side-by-side. We currentlv have demo version of GOE that looks very good. Look for a comparison review of GOE and Diamond in the near future.

Until next month, keep thinking and promoting Atari!

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Turbocharge Your ST Computer Today!

TDI Modula-2 ST Commercial Version

By Craig Harvey (WAUG)

If you're reading this article, you probably already know that Modula-2 is not some new shoot-em-up arcade game. It is a programming language that can be used as an alternative to BASIC, Pascal, C, Fortran, etc.

It is most similar to Pascal, since it was created by Niklaus Wirth, who also created Pascal. Pascal was created as an instructional tool so students learning to program would be forced to use structured programming techniques (i.e., writing programs in little easily identifiable chunks that each do one particular job). This results in a program that is easy for you and others to read and debug and modify as needed. If you have ever written a long program in Basic, you know that it can be hard to come back and modify it a few months later unless you have taken the trouble to separate out subroutines and document everything very clearly. Languages like Pascal and Modula-2 simply force you to do some of this, rather than leaving it up to you to remember.

Since Pascal was created as an instructional tool, it was not created with certain features that would be needed for major software development. Modula-2 was the answer to this, since it adds functions like multitasking, machine level support, and the ability to break the program into pieces (modules) that can be compiled separately. This is where the name comes from: MODUlar LAnguage. Any of you familiar with the latest versions of Pascal (especially Turbo Pascal version 4.0 for the IBM world) know Pascal has had things added to it (e.g. UCSD Pascal) that gave it similar power to Modula-2. So, it appears the choice now depends a lot more on personal taste than on which is more powerful.

There have been various reviews of the TDI Modula-2 package. but none that I am aware of have included the commercial version, other than mentioning what is stated in the promotional material for it (namely that it includes source code for all the library modules). So this review will briefly give the standard info on each version, then I will explain what I like and dislike about the package compared to other programming languages.

TDI markets three versions for the ST, all of which work on either color or monochrome systems with at least 512K of RAM and a single-sided disk drive.

Regular Version:

Full interface to GEM DOS, AES and VDI, plus Atari BIOS, XBIOS, and LINE-A routines.

Full screen GEM-based interactive editor that can automatically go through the edit-compile-link-run process and return you to compiler errors in your source code.

Smart Linker with an Optimizer that only links in needed code.

Supports transcendental functions, and 32bit real numbers.

No copy-protection is used, so it easily works on hard drives and ramdisks, as well as from floppies.

CODE statement allows in-line machine code commands.

Developer's Version:

Adds a Resource Construction Set (including a utility to embed the resource file into the main program), Symbol file decoder, Link file disassembler, source file cross-referencer, symbolic debugger, a high-level GEM application library, andsource code to a ramdisk and a print spooler.

Commercial Version:

All of the above plus source code to all the library routines.

If you are used to other languages at all, there is one thing you will probably hate immediately about Modula-2 -- all the special words of the language must be capitalized correctly. For example, the reserved words like BEGIN and END must be fully capitalized, and procedure names from the standard libraries must match the capitalization used in those libraries, like FormAlert or WindowOpen. I would hope eventually a smarter editor will provide an option to type these things in lower case and have it automatically convert to the proper case. The major advantage of the case rules is that Modula-2 provides what I consider the most readable source code around.

In general, especially when using the language on smaller programs, there is no need to use the language's modular capabilities, so each program will just be one single module. However, if you get into writing big programs, or

if you want to attempt a team development approach where each person writes different pieces of the program, then the modular capability becomes very useful. In this case, each major part of the program would have its own DEFINITION module and IMPLEMENTATION module, where the definition module contains only those pieces of information needed to be known by the other programmers, and the implementation module contains all the nitty gritty stuff of what your module actually does. This capability also allows you to build up your own libraries of pre-compiled routines that can be imported into future programs as needed.

Since most of one's programming time seems to be spent with the editor, a few (many?) words are called for here. I find the editor provided with this package to be fairly pleasant for the most part, and I use it for most of my smaller word processing chores like letter writing, rather than going to a fancier word processor that would require me to switch my mental function key table. However, there are a couple little annoyances:

1) When moving the cursor multiple spaces with the arrow keys, the cursor does not appear to move until the key is released, when it moves to where it would have moved if it had been moving the whole time. In other words, you have to time how long to hold down the arrow key without being able to see the cursor moving. This has to be easily fixed, because the cursor *does* move fine if there are compiler errors embedded in the text as a result of an unsuccessful compilation attempt.

2) The option to automate the edit-compile-link (or more usually edit-compile-re-edit) process works fine when you have both definition and implementation modules, but if you're just writing a program as one single module, you are not returned to the editor after compilation errors occur. You have to rerun the editor and then load in the file to edit, rather than having it be done for you.

3) If you have the automatic edit-compile-link option turned on, and try to abandon from editing a file, it will still try to compile it first, even if you turn off the automatic option before trying to abandon.

It should also be mentioned here that any ASCII text editor will work fine to write your code, but I don't think it would be possible to get another editor to make use of the automatic edit-compile-link feature.

Developer's Version:

For me, the most useful part of this version is the Resource Editor, since it allows *easy* (and *fun* creation of dialog boxes and menus of various types for use in your programs. You even get a utility to embed the resulting .RSC file into your main program so the final program is all in one .PRG file. Note that the documentation provided is not sufficient to accomplish this final step, but there is a public domain file I downloaded from GEnie that gives a very easy to follow example of how to do it.

I admit I haven't had occasion to do much with all the other tools provided in this package, but at least they all seemed to work. The one time I used the debugger it generated a rather huge file, so I've stuck to more simple-minded debugging techniques like trial-and-error.

Commercial Version:

The first thing I discovered in looking at the source code for some of the lower level routines (e.g. GEMDOS, BIOS, XBIOS) was a system command was being imported that I hadn't seen documented anywhere: PUSH. (e.g. FROM SYSTEM IMPORT ADR, SETREG, REG, CODE, PUSH;)

From the little I've dealt with assembly language programming, I figured this meant that it would take its argument and push it onto the stack. I confirmed this by comparing the procedures for routines like GEMDOS.ConIn to the corresponding assembly code in "ST Internals." Therefore, for anyone who likes to dig in and wallow around in the low level stuff from within Modula-2, you now have an alternative to using the CODE command. And if you haven't followed a word of this so far, you can probably conclude that the investment in the commercial version is not yet worth it for your purposes.

The next thing I was curious about was how the various AES and VDI calls were done. It turns out they are all based on the GemCall routine in the GEMAESbase module. By examining the source for these routines, you can correlate the TDI GEM procedures with those in other languages, since they are all based on the same IntIn and IntOut arrays. And who knows, you might even be able to modify them somewhat if you wanted.

Support

In the two years that I've owned this package, TDI has been good about coming out with upgrades to the package once or twice a year for prices ranging from about $10 to $50 depending on how much improvement has been made, and they have sent out questionnaires for suggested improvements. When I first acquired the package, I could easily get questions answered by TDI via CompuServe E-mail, but later this did not work, and I'm not sure of their current policy on this means of support. I've written a couple letters with various complaints and suggestions, none of which have been answered, but hopefully they will be taken into account in future revisions.

Documentation

The manual that comes with the package is mostly very good at explaining how to use the system, but not how to program in Modula-2, so you will need other references for that. The manual does have

an index of all the library's procedure names, constants, and variable types, which is nice but it does not fill the need for a real index, since that is all it lists and no page numbers are given.

Regarding other useful references, I've found the Abacus book "ST Internals" to come in very handy for proper use of a few of the GEMDOS commands, and if you want to really get into GEM, you will probably want some other book specifically on that.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the value of a series of articles and programming examples by Sol Guber that have appeared in ST Applications, and are now available directly from him on disk (find the file 'MOD2INDX.TXT' on GEnie or on the Clear Thinking BBS at 313-761-2444).

As a final note, Jefferson Software also has a Modula-2 package for the ST, but since I have never tried it, I can't make any comparisons.

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Scientists and third graders

by Clinton Pierce (GAG)

I hope to teach some programming techniques through examples and analogies through a series of articles. These are not intended for any particular computer or programming language. Whether you're writing a spreadsheet in Pascal or trying to pass a BASIC class, something here should help you.

Imagine scientists discussing the Grand Unified Theory (The Ultimate Physics problem: to unite the four forces into one theory) and proposing "Gravity and electromagnitism are related because when apples fall on my head, I turn off my radio and move to another tree...." Stupid, eh? Well, take a class full of third graders. They've been trying to learn multiplication and are having little success. The teacher has just been having them memorize the table of numbers, and wonders why nobody learns. One bright student figures out that 3x2=6 because 2+2+2=6 (The product of i and j equals the summation of i, j times). And suddenly the entire table becomes easy to learn.

Sounds too ludicrous to be true? A teacher would surely explain multiplication more clearly and scientists usually aren't so dense. Then why do I beat my head when Fortran students average 20 numbers using 20 variables? Few students have course in logic before entering programming -- a sad mistake. Logic is nothing more than the relationship of element to whole in a set of objects or events. Students do one of two things when making logic mistakes, they aren't detailed enough or they don't understand the grand picture.

For example, take the problem: you are a human brain, make your body stand up. Simple, huh? Let's play "BRAIN:" 1. lean upper torso forward 2. straighten knees a little 3. check semicircular canals (for head's position) 4. adjust lumbar and groin muscles to keep head up 5. adjust tendons in feet 6. are we "upright" yet? If so stop. If not go to step 1.

A lot of things could go wrong here. If you had just straightened your knees, you would've fallen on the chair (or your face). On the other extreme, you could've tried to control the individual molecular flexations that move the muscles. Your brain is much too busy for that stuff, and it's done by the central nervous system and the muscular system.

Problems in logic must be thought out completely and in detail. Overkill can be as bad as underkill (?). Examine the relationships of all of the variables, are they of great importance (do my feet know how to flex themselves)? In how many ways do they relate (does my gleutus maximus help my balance)? Break the problem down into steps. Is each step as important (significant) as all of the others? If not, is it actually a substep of another step?

Until next time, sleep well, Descartes...

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QuickCode -- The 8bit Programmer's Library

By Gary Ferris (CHAOS)

It's not often that a new company can step in and make an immediate impact with a strong new software package, especially for a computer line that's been around as long as the Atari 8bit has. Stardust Software seems to have performed such a feat with QuickCode -- The Programmer's Library.

When I was first approached about QuickCode, I was, frankly, skeptical. I felt that it was probably too late in the game to be marketing a new programming language for the 8bit line. When the review package arrived and I had a chance to experiment with it, I realized that this was going to be worth a much closer look.

The QuickCode package contains a double-sided disk with the backside containing a great deal of additional documentation, which is not included in the impressive 66 page manual. QuickCode will work with any Atari XL/XE or 800 with at least 48k, one disk drive, and Mac-65 cartridge.

For those readers, unfamiliar with Mac-65, the next section will be a short overview of the language and what it can do.

Mac-65 is what's known as an editor/assembler. The cartridge also includes an excellent debugging utility, called DDT. Mac-65 is based on the Atari editor/ assembler cartridge, but with many enhanced features. The editor is actually divided into two parts. The edit mode is the one which will normally be used as it provides error checking similar to Atari BASIC. The other mode available is the textmode which provides no error checking, but can be used to edit nonassembler files.

The assembler allows you to write code in a form which is fairly easily understood by humans (ex. JMP $2000 means JUMP to memory location $2000) which is then converted (assembled) into the true machine level code which is impossible to comprehend for the average person (the above example would read as, 4C 00 20 in machine code).

The Mac-65 Assembler is especially powerful since it allows you to form macros. Forming a macro is literally like adding a new command to the language. If you have a routine which you are going to be using frequently, and do not wish to write the entire routine in each place it will be used, you can use the macro.

The DDT debugging utility allows you to actually view the program in operation. It allows you to set breakpoints (spots where the program will pause) which allow you to view the contents of variables and registers to see if the program is doing what it should.

Although not as easy to understand, assembly language can give an increase in execution speed of several hundred percent. This brings us to the reason QuickCode was developed. Although QuickCode is not actually a language, it is really a library of Mac-65 Macros, it allows you to write assembly language programs in a form which makes them nearly as easy to read and understand as a program written in a programming language. In fact, many of the QuickCode macros have the same name as the BASIC function they replace.

Other macros which have no exact counterpart BASIC retain the same general structure. If you are a user of Action!, BASIC XL, OR BASIC XE, then there are many commands you will recognize that are not in the regular Atari BASIC.

Macros must first be selected in a manner which the manual states may seem awkward at first. I still find it to be somewhat cumbersome, but it does get easier as you get used to it.

You start with a file called FILE.HND which contains a list of all the macros with a semicolon in front of the macro name. This places them all in the comment field. To select a macro, you go to that line and delete the semicolon. Then you place the name of your source program at the end of FILE.HND in an .INCLUDE statement and save the modified FILE.HND to disk.

I will discuss mostly the player/missile graphics macros and those used for program control or decision testing where I feel the power of QuickCode asserts itself most. You have a large number of options available to you for condition testing and program control in QuickCode, each of which has its own specific advantages which gives you tremendous flexibility. You

have the familiar FOR/NEXT and ON/GOTO/GOSUB. You also have a form of the IF/THEN sequence which has the added power of the ELSE command.

There are several variations of IF, each specific for the type of variable you are testing. In addition, you have the DO/OD loop which is claimed to be as much as 30 times as fast as a FOR/NEXT loop. The LOOP/ENDLOOP macro is claimed to be up to 50 times as fast as FOR/NEXT. The WHILE/ENDWHILE loop will execute as long as a set condition is true. With the CASE macro, you create two tables, one containing elements to be compared, and the other containing the point the program should jump to if a match is found.

There are also many Assembler type pseudo opcodes which test the status register such as JCC which will jump to the designated location if the Carry Flag is set.

Where QuickCode really shows it's power, is in it's graphics routines. It allows you to work in any graphics mode, even those unaccessable from BASIC or the OS! It allows you to easily manipulate the Player/Missiles and allows you to put the movement routines in the VBI (Vertical Blanking Interval) or access them as a subroutine.

It also makes manipulating the Display List fairly easy. The DL macro will change the OS pointer to your DISPLAY LIST and the DLI macro enables or disables Interrupts. The VBI macro will turn a user defined VBI routine on or off. The CHST macro allows you to have multiple character sets in memory and easily select which is active at any time. Assuming you have loaded a character set in page 110 (a page is 256 bytes), the QuickCode command would be CHST 110, in BASIC, the command needed is POKE 756,110.

Most of the DOS functions are available to you from your program with macros named for the function. For example, to RENAME a file in QuickCode , you enter RENAME 1,"TESTFILE.SRC,NEWFILE.SRC". In BASIC, you have to use XIO 32,#1,0,0,"D:TESTFILE.SRC ,NEWFILE.SRC".

Although QuickCode is definitely not for the Novice, I feel that anyone who has a reasonable grasp of BASIC, ACTION! or other language could easily write programs in QuickCode with out being an assembly language expert.

If you intend to write a program, which makes any significant use of the Atari's graphics capabilities, then I feel QuickCode is the logical choice.

For more information about QuickCode, contact:
Stardust Software,
P.O. Box 33192
Indianapolis, Indiana 46203.

Craig Schaff's Help 'n' Tips

This will be an article of helpful tips of information, definitions of basic computer terms, short programs that you can type-in in just a few minutes and other little tidbits of information.

If you have any comments, questions or hints, pass them on to me at 787-3970. I don't have a large library of tips, so any will help. Here's a call now! Hello. Yes, I did, with extra cheese and no anchovies. Sorry, that was my health food order. Okay as I was saying, this column will be serious and there will not be any fooling around!

I'll begin with a definition: PEEK. Peek is a function used in BASIC programming to recover the value in a memory location. To get an idea of how it works type in the following two lines exactly as they appear.

```
10 PRINT PEEK(764)
20 GOTO 10
```

After you have typed them in, (pressing Return after each line), type the word RUN then hit the Return key and watch what happens. The numbers are the Atascii (I'll explain Atascii later) number for the last key pressed. As you press different keys, the numbers will change too.

What you did was tell the computer to print on the screen the number in the memory location #764, which is the memory location for the last key pressed.

Until next month, "help take a byte out of crime."

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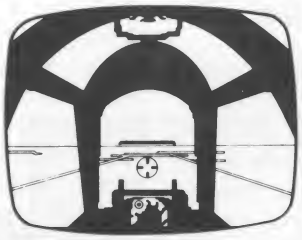

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GFA BASIC Training: Reboot Camp

by Sally & Frank Nagy (CHAOS)

Time to reload that GFA BASIC language disk filed away in your dusty disk archives. Just because it wasn't easy to use before doesn't mean you can't learn it now with the aid of GFA's BASIC training manual. This book helped me get a running start with this version of BASIC for the ST. GFA Basic by Michtron is also required.

Program development is handled step by step with various commands and functions coming into practical application. Enough are presented to provide a solid foundation to build on. Much like a beginning music book teaches enough notes to play a couple simple tunes, this book starts you off with enough to get your feet wet with some easy programs.

Create a picture adding animation and sound. Write a player piano that plays "Mary Had a Little Lamb" with a ball dancing on the piano keys. Learn how easy it is to control your mouse and re-define its shape. Falling balls are caught with a hand moved via the mouse. Change screen text sizes. Make random dice tosses. Form alert boxes. Create a Simon Memory game.

In a chapter on Graphics Text, learn about the Deftext command which defines the color, style, degree of rotation and the size of the text; the Graphmode command which determines the graphic mode; and the Text command which tells the computer to print a specified string on the screen at a specified place.

Only one new aspect of programming is ever handled at a time, allowing easy integration of the material. The book builds chapter upon chapter with applied understandings. Even the novice who follows the work plan laid out by the book will have a fully developed program when he is through.

Self tests are provided at the end of each chapter. Completing these encourage hands-on understanding of independent programming skills and give debugging experience.

For example, the Graphics Text self test asks, "What does the first variable after Deftext tell the computer?" The answer is, "It changes the color." After looking at a short program listing more questions are asked: What color will the text be in this listing? How many pixels high will the letters be? What style of text will be printed? and so on. But to find the answers you will have to refer to the text.

The self tests don't list the answers anywhere. Most books like this include a crib sheet. Only a few will be able identify errors and correct them rather than continue in confusion.

I did find this book explaining many commands and functions. Working through the examples greatly expanded my GFA Basic programming experience. I learned the GET/PUT and SGET /SPUT graphic commands used to display all or a portion of the screen and got a handle on how to animate programs.

I really disliked how the return key was indicated as an arrow, especially when that's all there is on the line. (On top of this, an editing error made some of these arrows upside down question marks.) Mistakes like these to present only confusion for the young programmer.

A problem occurs on page 52, the self test for Chapter 2. In the program DAYS.BAS, the corrected version of the program should list all the information in a column rather than one long line statement.

In Appendix A, the Quick Reference to Commands and Functions left blanks for the reader to fill in. Again a reference like this would be better if it left nothing to the imagination or possible error of the novice.

All considered, the book presents 259 pages chock full of useful information.

GFA BASIC Reference Card

Michtron's GFA Basic "Slick Reference Card" is a smartly designed fold-out guide for GFA programmers. Folded, the 3 3/4 x 8 1/2 inch card easily slips into any GFA Basic Book. The Card accordions to 22 inches. Both sides pack details on proper syntax and required parameters for every command.

Brush up on Disk and Graphics Commands, Directory and Mouse functions. Machine level commands, GFA Basic and Compiler Error Messages, VT 52 Terminal Escape Codes, Types of Variables, Constants, Operators, and more.

This card is organized in a way people can readily use. For most people it's easier to think in terms of subject and find that alphabetically with commands as subheadings.

In this way, this resource has it over the GFA manual which lists by commands alone. You will want to keep this invaluable programming aid handy as you program in GFA Basic.

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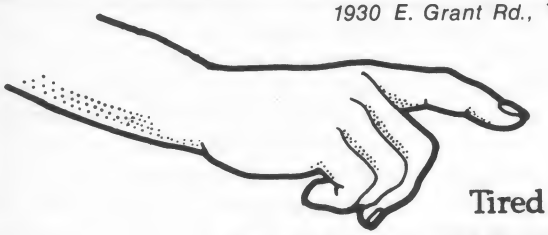

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THE *MASTER SERIES*

Summer Consumer Electonics Show Report

By Jerry Cross

If you are an avid Atari Game fan, I have some great news for you from the 1988 Summer Consumer Electronics Show held in Chicago, June 4-7. The rest of you can hold on to your seats!

I am in the latter group. I do enjoy playing games, but I was really looking forward to seeing Atari products like the CD-ROM player, PC clones and all the rest of the Atari line. I was also interested in new ST software. I was very disappointed to find none of these things displayed at Atari's booth. The entire shiny, black booth was dedicated to the Atari game systems (XE, 2600, 7800). The only STs (actually "hidden" behind the booth) were used by Hybrid Arts to demo MIDI software.

First, Atari's Electronic Entertainment division announced a new ad campaign entitled "The Fun is Back." Atari promised a multi-million dollar ad campaign (does this all sound familiar?) and has hired sports stars to appear in the ads. These include Ozzie Smith of the St. Louis Cardinals, Spud Webb of the Atlanta Hawks and Doug Williams of the Washington Redskins. Williams and Webb were at CES to endorse Atari products and sign autographs. Atari also plans a new promotion to help sales. If a buyer sends in the proof of purchase from Atari's Basketball cartridge, he/she will qualify for a trip to the NBA Championship series -- same for the Baseball game cartridge and the World Series and the Super-Bowl with a football cartridge. The game products will be sold in more stores, including Rose stores (in SE U.S.), Musicland/ Sam Goody stores and Ace Hardware and True Value stores and Montgomery Wards.

In other news, Atari plans to release 45 titles in the second half of 1988 -- six for the 2600, 19 for the 7800 and 20 for the Game machine. The games are licensed from (to name a few) Accolade, Broderbund, Cosmim, Data East, Electronic Arts, Epyx, Exidy, LucasFilm, Namco, Spectrum Holobyte and subLOGIC. Some of the titles for the XE machines include Gato, Ace of Aces, Airball, Into the Eagles Nest, Necromancer, FoodFight, Commando and Desert Falcon. New 7800 system games will include Ballblazer, Dark Chambers, Desert Falcon, Impossible Mission, Winter Games, Hat Trick, and Super Baseball. New 2600 titles include Crossbow, Sprintmaster, Super Baseball, and Super Football. Some of you may recognize that many of these games aren't new but are just re-released older games.

If you are a long-time Atari fan, the name Nolan Bushnell probably rings a bell. He is the founder of Atari and is now chairman of Axlon, Inc. Atari has hired Bushnell to develop additional games for the 2600 and 7800 game machines. It was not specified how many he will produce or the nature of the programs. In an interview printed in the July issue of the San Leandro Computer Club Journal, Bushnell stated, "We know the Atari system inside and out. The software we can do now almost makes it feel like a completely new machine."

Finally, Atari announced it has joined with Yamaha Music Corporation to promote both their products. For under $1000, you can now purchase a MIDI home music system. This is supposed to be an easy to use system which will include an Atari 520STfm, Yamaha PSS480 keyboard and Passport's Master-tracks Jr. The package should be available in the third quarter and will be sold at Lechmere and Federated stores.

Other companies at CES were showing a lot of other games; many were not ready for release on the ST but were being shown on other systems such as the Amiga and IBM. Dolphin Software demonstrated an interesting package of programs it hopes will do for Dolphin what Flight Simulator did for sub-LOGIC. The Dolphin Marine Software is a set of programs/ data disks that is a complete boating/sailing/voyaging simulation. You learn how to handle your boat, navigate, and everything you need to sail. You can ride anything from a tiny Catboat all the way up to a 32 foot Ketch cruiser. A learning series is also available. Prices for each disk will run around $44.95.

Epyx is making a major push into the ST game market with several new games including California Games, Final Assault, SuperCycle, Impossible Mission II, Temple of Apshai,

Sports-a-Rama and many more. Art and Film Director is a nice program which gives you the flexibility of a CAD program and a drawing program in one package. You can use this to make cute cartoons/screens to put into your home videos or more advanced uses like complete animation.

Taito, the coin-op company, will soon release several fun games -- Bubble Bobble, Alcon, Operation Wolf, Arkanoid, Renegade, Sky Shark and Gladiator are on the way. Baudville Software will be bringing out Award Maker Plus for the ST and may bring out additional library disks if the program is successful (ie, it's not pirated to death). Also, Dreamzone should be out in August. Broderbund introduced Star Wars and Downhill Challenge. They also showed VCR Companion, a program that creates colorful titles, graphics, credits, introductions, intermissions and endings for your videotapes.

First Row Software was trying to show a new program called Twilight Zone, but somebody forgot the password and no one had the manual when I was at their booth! It's supposed to be an adventure game. First Row also announced The Honeymooners, based on the TV show. These are currently being released for the Amiga, but will be ported over to the ST soon. Prime Time is a sophisticated simulation of network TV where players compete for program viewers in a ratings war. Prime Time is available for the ST now.

Intracorp announced a number of new programs including Murder on the Atlantic, Birds 'n Bees, Space Math and Business Card Maker. Paragon Software had several new games. The most interesting is an Infocom-type game called Guardians of Infinity. This games allows and understands multiple sentences -- it has some artificial intelligence that can actually figure out what you are trying to say! Telegames will be re-releasing several games -- some of them spiffed up a bit. Telegames also announced another addition to the game machine market called "The Personal Arcade System." It will run all of the older Coleco games and sells for around $50.

Three-sixty Software showed Warlock, an arcade game with 20 levels of difficulty and lots of cute little traps and problems to solve. Cinemaware was showing the recently released Three Stooges program. Also coming is King of Chicago, another great graphics adventure, and Sinbad. SSI introduced two new games. Questron II and Heros of the Lance, which is derived from TSR's Advanced Dungeon and Dragons DragonLance series. Heros of the Lance and Pool of Radiance are SSI's first in a series of colloborations with TSR. MicroComputer Games was showing Spitfire 40, a great-looking WWII flight simulator game. Data East has a new game called Platoon, which is based on the Viet Nam movie. They were passing out cute little dog-tags to CES visitors.

Gee, the list gets longer and longer, and did you notice how few productivity packages there were? In fact, the only non-entertainment software besides Hybrid Arts was LDW Power, a Lotus 1-2-3 version 2 compatible spreadsheet from Logical Design Works with built-in graphing capability, very fast calculations and a well-organized 232-page manual. LDW Power certainly was impressive. It's available now for only $150. As you can see, there were lots of new games coming out for the ST, but very few for 8bit users. With the exception of the game cartridges announced by Atari, very little is planned for the 8bit.

There were a few other interesting thing in the Computer Games and Entertainment area. Intex will be bringing out a neat little lap-top computer for kids. It is designed as a learning computer with memory and includes 16 learning activities designed to be educational and fun. They also plan to produce two optional plug-in learning cartridges. Suggested retail is $69 and cartridge will run around $20.

The Nintendo booth was beyond belief! It was about the size of a football field and took up most of the computer exhibit. It was filled with vendors showing dozens of new games. One of interest is called Adventure of Link. This is another adventure/arcade game, but includes a built-in battery that will store information for future use after the machine has been turned off. It would be interesting to see this in some of the Atari cartridges.

Integ, Epyx and several other companies are offering more of those VCR/board games. Expect to see titles such as Football, Golf, Soccer, Wrestling and 221B Baker Street, among others.

Moving into the "goofy products" area we have a toy called Footnotes, an electronic keyboard/mat you lay on the floor and jump on to create music. Or how about a hand-held Monopoly/Scrabble game? This one played against world champion Monopoly players and ended in a draw! It also features a removable Eprom socket so you can add additional games (when they come out). Winner of this year's goofiest product goes to Ultimate Creations for their Cubonic game. It is a cube with colored lights on each side; by flipping the cube over, you change the color of the lights. Study the patterns and continue flipping until you have the same colors on each side. It's sort of like an electronic Rubic's Cube, and only $200.

Last year I was kidding around about a couple of products. One was the waterproof radio/flashlight. Now you can't walk into a department store without seeing them. Well, this year I have a few predictions of products that will be hits! The first is called the Spectrum 3SE, the worlds smallest self-contained radar detector. It's loaded with features, and is smaller than a pack of cigarettes!

If you attended our last meeting, you may have seen a product that Lou was showing. It was a square, clear screen that lays on top of an overhead projector and plugs into your computer. It lets you

project the screen of your computer onto the wall. Well, what would happen if you took that screen, shrunk it to the size of a 35mm slide and put it into a projector? You would end up with the worlds smallest projection TV system. The one on display at CES had a very sharp, easy to see picture. The display can be as small as 2 feet and as big as 18! There is also an option for a built-in receiver and VCR. Prices range from $1000 to $3000 depending on the features.

The show was a disappointment for me with no new PCs or ABAQs to see. What was even more disappointing was Atari did not share its booth with third-party developers as in the past. One Atari representative at the booth simply said, "Why should we do the same thing every year?"

Well, I guess Nintendo was making that mistake over in its booth; Nintendo's 20,000 square-foot display area (no, that's not a misprint!) was filled with developers!

Classified Ads

For Sale: An XF551 Atari Disk drive, never used. DD/DS. Also, two Signalman Mark XII 1200 baud modems. Hayes Compatible RS-232Auto answer, Dial/call progress detection. Excellent started modem for beginners. $70 each. Call Jerry Cross, (517) 736-4544.

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Scott Sheck's Bowling League Secretary Ver. 2

8bit software review by Bill Kane (MACE)

Last fall I wrote a review of this program, and gave it a good rating. This coming year, I, am going to be a league secretary like my wife. I decided to take a shot at it because of this program. I noticed minor changes I would like made to the program, so I wrote a letter to Mr. Sheck asking if he could modify his software. I received a letter saying these changes already were available in an upgrade for $20. Though I feel this is too high an upgrade price, I knew it would be worth it. I guess it is all in what you consider the software is worth in the beginning.

Here is quick overview of the original program. It will support up to 255 bowlers and 2 to 36 teams. You can use one or two drives and the software directly supports any Epson-compatable dot matrix printer. It also includes a printer driver editor section. You can have up to eight bowlers per team and up to 40 roving subs per league. The software handles bowler and team forfeits, vacancies, blind scores, & absentees.

You can modify statistics very easy automatically computing and outputting: Ind. hdcp, games, pins, avg, hgs, hgh, hss, & hsh, team wins, losses, total pins, hgs, hgh, hss, & hsh, and individual standings for high average, game, game hdcp. series, & series hdcp.

Here are some of the changes: Print entering averages on weekly sheet and rank entering average; print bowlers ranked by improvement, which is the current average minus the entering average; enter the modify menu from the master menu; add comments to the weekly sheet; option of printing or not printing the hdcp totals on the team sheets produced from the sorted output section.

After entering scores, you now have the option to skip the sub scores section. You can selectively print the following items on the weekly sheet: replace Treasurer with President; display of the lane schedule; display of team scratch highs; display of team hdcp highs; display star of the week; display skunk of the week. These options are turned on and off from a special screen in the output scores section where you print the weekly sheet.

You can send weekly sheet output to a file as well as the screen and printer, and of course, you can output individual record sheets from the output scores section. The previous weekly games can also be modified. As an added feature for those of you who have and are used to using the Atari CX-85 keypad, it is now supported by the program for data entry. Just plug it into joystick port 2.

This was a fine program to start with, and now is even better. I have seen other programs, and this one puts them to shame. Scott Sheck, 9075 Centerway Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879.

Indiana Jones and The 1200XL

By Frank Fellheimer (GKAUG)

I am the owner of not just one 1200XL, but count them, three. Maybe you'd like to sell me the Brooklyn Bridge, but be sure that I am no fool. I bought my 1200XL's because I really like a number of features not available on the newer 800XL/XE or even the older 800s.

After three years of ribbing on my system, I undertook several projects to get my system up to snuff with the others...it's even better now. For years I felt like Indiana Jones trying to locate and keep a precious jewel. You know the troubles he had!

My trip is over because I finally got back home with all the goodies. Let's recap some of the problems of the 1200XL.

1. 64K RAM only: No expansion possible.
2. No 5vdc for Interfaces & Modems.
3. XL Operating system only
4. Loss of Luminance control on high end of color ranges.
5. Text resolution not as good as 800XL.

Have you had any of these problems? I have, for sure, and every one laughed at me because I still wanted to use this "beast" of a machine. Why? Let me tell you. It's still the only 8bit computer Atari has with four function keys. They control the cursor with only one key stroke and are redefinable. The Start/ Select/Option buttons are out of the way so you don't hit them by mistake. It has a wide Delete/ Back Space key, a wide Return key, a wide Control key, two quadruple-wide Shift keys and wide Caps key. The keyboard itself is probably the best responding, simplest operating and maintaining, and well-built keyboard I have seen.

"That's just wonderful," you say, "and how about the problems?" OK, here we go. I have an ICD 256K RAM expansion board; it works really great. Newell also has one for the 1200XL. The 5vdc can be returned to your serial port simply by jumpering out R-63 (current limiting resistor) inside the unit.

Once that is done, you can buy any standard interface or peripheral without need of an external power supply. Since the 1200XL doesn't have a built-in operating system, there is no need to hold Option to boot Machine Language programs...if it's BASIC, you can still slip in any cartridge you want.

Another new development is I was able to obtain a dual operating system for my 1200XL. Fred Farleigh of Battle Creek makes the "FOS" for the 1200XL. It allows me to switch between the 1200XL operating system and the old 800 operating system...now I can use all the programs available for the Atari since I got mine in 1982. I love it!

How about the luminance control? That can be cured by jumpering capacitor #C115. Lastly, text resolution can be improved by snipping off one end of capacitor #C60. It's enough improvement it can be noticed.

I hope this little article has helped you 1200XL owners. Look me up at the GKAUG BBS (616) 657- 2665.

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Macro Mouse
by Charles Johnson

by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

Macro Mouse allows the user to access many features of the control panel and many new features without filling up your desktop accessory slots. It's also an easy way to initiate multiple repetitive keystrokes with two keys.

To activate Mouse Macro, simply press [alt] and [help], a line of text will appear in place of the desktop menu titles. Press a function key to activate commands (such as F9 to run calculator), when finished press the [escape] key to exit.

Here's a list of the functions of Macro Mouse and Macro Utilities:

[F1]: record macro - memorizes all keystrokes, mouse movement and mouse clicks to create macros.

[F2]: run macro - plays back the stored sequence of keystrokes. It looks like a ghost is running the computer, with the mouses arrow floating all over the screen and selecting programs to run.

[F3]: modify macro - while running an existing macro to the point it needs to be changed, then keying in the correct key strokes while it records the new changes.

[F4]: loop macro - runs a specified macro over and over again.

[F5]: change or select screen colors: up to ten sets of desktop colors may be selected, changed and saved to disk.

[F6]: display or change date and time - example: [Monday July 1, 1988 08:04:50 P.M.] is displayed in upper left corner of screen temporarily.

[F7]: set key repeat rate and key delay rate - using numbers rather than a slider bar makes it easier to reset rates at a future time. The key repeat rate is useful for drawing lines quickly with the underscore or period characters. The key delay rate controls the time between touching a key and when it starts to repeat. If the delay is too short, then its hard to type text without double letters, if the delay is too long then you have to wait too long before drawing lines.

[F8]: key click - on/off.

[F9]: calculator - a limited use conversion from hex to decimal or decimal to hex.

[F10]: free ram - shows free ram in upper right hand corner of screen.

[F11]: load macro - from disk, you must remember name of macro to load it.

[F12]: save macro - to disk, for future use.

[F13]: disk verify - on/off, I always use verify for floppy disks.

[F14]: screen echo - on/off, whatever text goes to the screen also goes to the printer.

[F15]: ascii code - gives access to upper 128 symbols in Atari character set, like foreign language, scientific, copyright and trademark symbols, to be displayed on screen only.

[F16]: screen dump - to Degas file, extension automatically added.

[F17]: printer codes - allows sending format codes directly to printer, like: top of form, skip over perforations, double strike mode, ect. Also will send text to printer, one line at a time. Useful for titles, addressing envelopes, ect.

[F18]: not used.

[F19]: not used.

[F20]: warm/cold reset - a warm reset will allow ram disks and certain variables to remain in memory, a cold reset is the same as turning the power off and on again, without actually removing power from the system. Repeatedly cycling the power on solid state electronics is not recommended. The cold reset is a valuable option in this software.

A macro is simply a series of keystrokes, mouse movements or mouse clicks used to run/exit an application or open/close a folder. Let's say after boot-up, I want to exit the existing D:\ directory, then open the E:\ directory to run Word Writer ST. First press [alt] and [help] to view function key definitions, press [F1] for record macro, press [F4] to store the new macro there, then begin the sequence: move the mouse to the upper left close box on the D:\ directory, click it to exit D:\, then double click E:\ to bring up the E:\ directory, then double click the Word Writer folder, then double click the Word Writer program and if you want, double click the document you want to load. To end the macro, press [control] and [shift] and [alternate]. Now save the macro to your boot disk (either A: or

C:) and you're ready to run it. Running the macro is easy: press [alt] and [help] to access the command line, press [F2] to run a macro, press [F4] to select which macro to run and watch it happen. Its like a ghost is operating your computer!

Possible uses for Macro Mouse: If you use your word processor most of the time, the ST could be macro'ed at boot up to open the word processor folder, then load your word processor, then load your document and even go to the end of the existing document, already for you to start typing; to automate repetitive keystrokes in a database or spreadsheet; to automatically load any program and run it, without having to open a directory, open a folder, load the program, select the options and finally run it, and if you choose, run it continuously for demos.

While adding Macro Mouse and its utility package to my boot disk, I found didn't need a total of 34K of other programs. While only taking up 36k for the Macmouse.acc and Macutil.prg, it gives the user two screen dumps, one to printer and one to disk, both available at the same time. It speeds up the "disk info" function from 12 seconds on a ten meg drive to under 3 seconds.

With the way Charles Johnson continuously updates programs, (he is the author of ArcShell) I think we can look forward to other improvements for this fine package. Macro Mouse has found a permanent home on my desktop. Thanks!

The manual is fifty pages long and is quite complete except for installation of all the programs. I would have liked the disk set-up with an auto folder and the supplied programs arranged properly on the disk. This package might be confusing for the newer ST user.

It will work with any program, not just GEM programs, with the following exceptions: First Cadd, SubLogics Flight Simulator, smpte-tracks, DX-Android, Spectrum 512, Fselect (PD), or any other program that uses only a joystick. It works fine with Universal File Selector!

The newest feature just added and mentioned in the readme.doc file is resolution dependent macros. You can have three auto-run macros and Macro Mouse will select one of them at boot-up depending on the resolution your system is in. Also the values from the conversion calculator can be input directly into a program like a word processor or spreadsheet. The tutorial shows how to write a macro using the Spectrum slide viewer with slides and how to save and run your macro. The configuration program gives the option of drive (A:\ thru P:\), change the size of the recording buffers or select one of four auto-run macros. Macros typically take about 4k to 6k of memory.

Macro Mouse is not copy-protected, runs in all three resolutions, sells for about $28 and is distributed by Antic Publishing. It is written entirely in assembly language for maximum speed.

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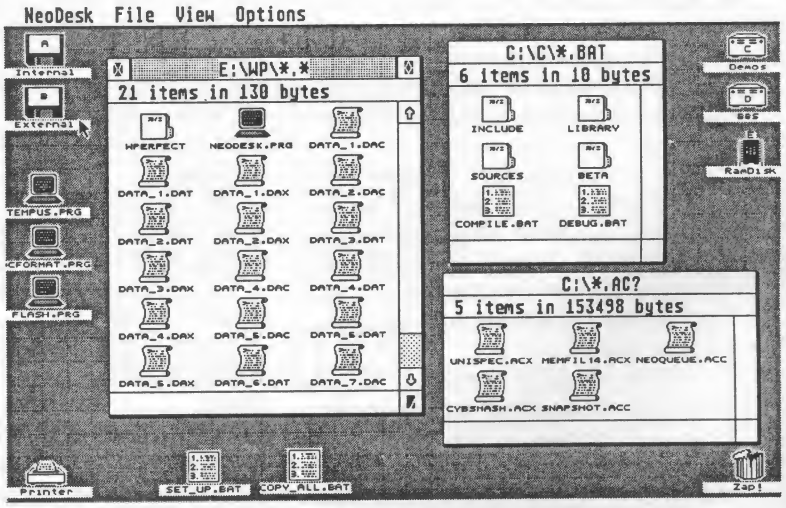

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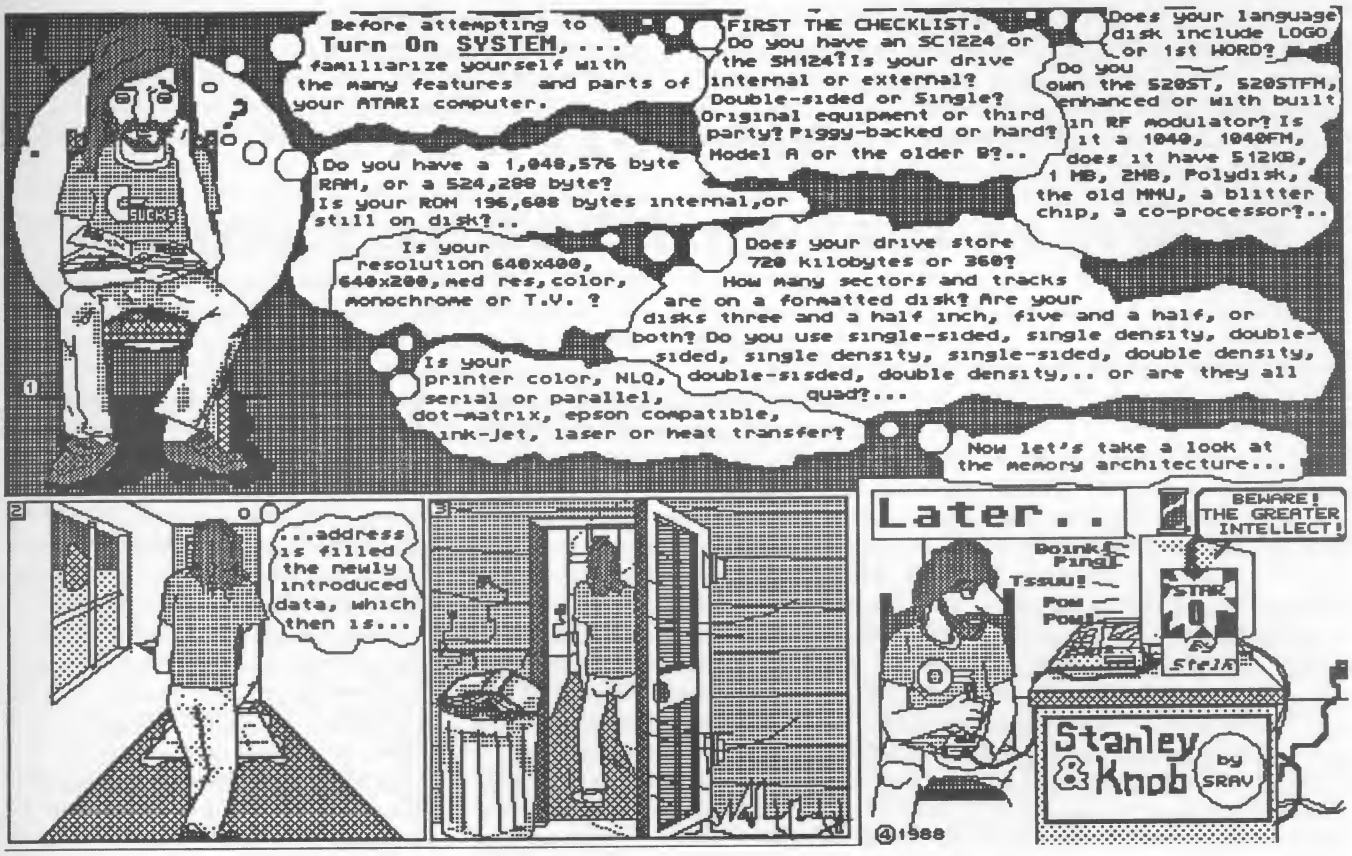
Before attempting to Turn On SYSTEM, ... familiarize yourself with the many features and parts of your ATARI computer.
FIRST THE CHECKLIST. Do you have an SC1224 or the SM124? Is your drive internal or external? Double-sided or Single? Original equipment or third party? Piggy-backed or hard? Model A or the older B?..
Does your language disk include LOGO or 1st WORD?
Do you own the 520ST, 520STFM, enhanced or with built in RF modulator? Is it a 1040, 1040FM, does it have 512KB, 1 MB, 2MB, Polydisk, the old MMU, a blitter chip, a co-processor?..
Do you have a 1,048,576 byte RAM, or a 524,288 byte? Is your ROM 196,608 bytes internal, or still on disk?..
Is your resolution 640x400, 640x200, med res, color, monochrome or T.V. ?
Does your drive store 720 kilobytes or 360? How many sectors and tracks are on a formatted disk? Are your disks three and a half inch, five and a half, or both? Do you use single-sided, single density, double-sided, single density, single-sided, double density, double-sisded, double density,.. or are they all quad?...
Is your printer color, NLQ, serial or parallel, dot-matrix, epson compatible, ink-jet, laser or heat transfer?
Now let's take a look at the memory architecture...
...address is filled the newly introduced data, which then is...
Later..
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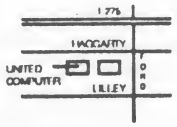

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New 8bit Software
Commercial and Public Domain

By John Nagy (CHAOS)

I can't begin to tell you about all the goodies newly available for our 8bit Atari, but several are particularly exciting right now.

Public Domain Releases

Alfcrunch - Not a way to smash furry aliens, this is finally a *better* file compactor than ARC (archive). For about a year, ARC has been the protocol of choice for "making little ones out of big ones." Arc uses the same format as the IBM and ST archive, allowing interchange between machines.

The reduced size and recovery of the original filenames is very important to users to tranfer files and also for backing up files in a minimum of disk space. The down side of ARC has been occasional "CRC Checksum" errors making the output files not match the input, a buggy user interface on the 8bit ARC and un-ARC programs can cause lots of lost time and effort, and the *slow* performance of ARC on the 8bit.

Alfcrunch, by Alfred of the Programmer's Aid BBS (416) 465-4182, provides a remarkable alternative to ARC. I don't know how it works... but it works great! Alfred, whoever he is, doesn't call this work "shareware" or ask for donations... although few have been more deserving.

When I first tested Alfcrunch to compact a list of files, I was certain it had errored out or was somehow "faking it", since it was done in 30 seconds! The same list later took almost four minutes to ARC. It was even faster un-ALFing (?) the compacted file ...only about 20 seconds! De-ARCing its mate took over 3 minutes. And the bottom line: ARC saved 26% compared to the total of the original file sizes, while Alfcrunch saved 45%!

I could not coax Alfcrunch into making any errors of its own and the documentation that comes with it is very thorough.

The output file from Alfcrunch (version 1.2 and higher) can also be "viewed" with any of the many ARC-view programs floating around on the BBS circuit, allowing the file contents and retored sizes to be examined without processing the file to a disk. So, Alfcrunch solves all of the problems of ARC except the compatiability with other type computers. As a result, I can only see two cases that would make you choose to use any other compaction method: 1) When you know your file must be later read by machines other than your 8bit; 2) When you must transfer a boot disk or a DOS (use DISKCOM).

DETERM - A new teminal to compete in the EXPRESS! dominated telecomunications market. This one, by Jim Dillow, offers a few interesting features, the most noteable one, a built-in Breakout game, playable even while online or downloading files!

At this point, R: driven modem systems (850 interface-type and maybe XM301/1030 modems) are supported. Also, Modem.BAT files are supported for sending commands at bootup to your modem. Other functions are pretty conventional for a good terminal (macros, phone lists, etc), plus there is support for easing some of the PC-Pursuit command entry confusion for subscribers to that service.

SignMaker 1.3 - Jeff Colehour impressed us with SignMaker, reviewed briefly in an earlier column. Version 1.3 goes further to debug and simplify the use of this shareware program. Basically an alternative to PrintShop, SignMaker allows the use of any two PrintShop format icons and any combination of any three Atari fonts in any of four sizes, all on the same page. Text can be imported from normal word processor files, and can be automatically centered. The biggest change in the new version is the view sign feature. Although it must first save the sign data to a disk (and it takes a whole disk!), this lets you examine the final product before printing, as well as saving it for later use. If you save it to ramdisk, the process is very fast, so viewing need not be a painfully long experience on an extended memory computer.

PS Utilities 1.0 - Rich Spencer has put several useful features into one package, written in ACTION!. It accomplishes the hard-to-live-without functions of renaming, copying, and deleting PrintShop format icons. It also allows conversion of MicroPainter (Koala/Touch Tablet) format files into icons (and back!). Although these features are available (one at a time) via

the commercial PrintShop Companion plus various other PD programs, this is a nice package for serious PrintShop users. The documentation ends with some very useful information about the innards of a PrintShop disk, and asks for input for future versions.

POSDEMO - Hold on to your seat for an 800+ sector download of Xenia Research's Point of Sale demo. Although it is a demo of a commercial product, this demo is worth its weight in RAM chips if you want to show off your 8bit system. It requires that you DiskCom the file onto a double density disk, and when it runs, it shows many functions of a store inventory, sales, receipt, ordering, and saleperson reporting system. Barcodes are printed and read, documents and reports stream out of the printer, the display shows finely designed "Synfile" looking screens for input and output. This system is expected to sell for well under $200 including the Barcode reader and can network several sales locations for interdependant operation. It should be available for sale by the time you read this. Best Electronics of San Jose, CA and Butlers Computers in Federal Way, WA will have supplies of POS NET.

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Commercial releases

As the "big" software companies move out of 8bit support, imports, small companies and "basement operations" are taking over, often with innovative offerings. Three recent releases for the 8bit continue this trend: a new disk operating system, SuperDOS; an operating environment, MTOS; and a machine language utility, Programmer's Pal.

SuperDOS is an Austrailian import, written by Paul Nicholls (US distribution is by Technical Support, 205 Peoria Street, Daly City, CA 94014). The price is $20 plus $1 shipping. Unlike some DOS replacements, SuperDOS does not use the kernel from Atari DOS 2.0 or 2.5. SuperDOS does have the same DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS structure but it is all new code. Also included is an AUX. SYS file for the seldom used features, and menu utilities for running BASIC or binary programs.

So what makes this DOS anything you would want? Plenty. First, it supports all three normal Atari disk densities, with automatic sensing and reconfiguring. It sets up its own ramdisk, checking first to see if it should be any configuration up to 320K - even Axlon ramdisks for use on 800's! It will automatically copy any file with a .RAM extender into its ramdisk at bootup, and will switch to ramdisk for any input/output if DRIVE #1 goes offline. That means you can copy files to RAM (which will be called by anything from D5: to D8:), shut off your D1: and the program will run from RAMDISK with no device number errors.

It'll trace and restore deleted files, as well as attempt to patch damaged sector files. You can use lower case, inverse, and numbers in the filenames. Its binary save will even save a cartridge to disk. It will copy to and from cassettes. A true sector copy feature skips empty sectors. DOS 3.0 is even supported for conversion to DOS 2.x format using one or two drives. Set your key repeat rate, verify, buffers, etc. from the menu without pokes. XIO support has been added for access to the higher functions of SuperDOS from BASIC or ML programs, all with good documentation.

All this plus those things we have gotten used to on the up-scale DOS's, like single keypress menus, resident DUP.SYS, menu-top indicators of drive densities, double column file directories, high-speed and skew I/O support for the U.S. Doubler and Supermax, and a lot more. So, how is it to use? It feels a lot like DOS 2.x or SmartDOS using a menu. The screen keeps changing colors according to the process underway. Most operations are nicely prompted, with only a few too many "are you sure" messages. But if you don't want to see them, most operations can suppress verification by adding /N to your filespec. Similar nice touches include the good sense to cause only a single filename to be changed when trying to undo that curse of accidental duplicate filenames.

Is there anything bad about SUPERDOS? Not exactly. At $20, it is a good buy, but performs

short of the Rolls Royce of DOS, SpartaDOS. All in all, SUPERDOS is a super product, maybe the best "DOS 2 type" available. It is a perfect upgrade for an intermediate computer user who doesn't need or want to learn to use SpartaDOS.

MTOS - Multitasking Operating System is written by Tom Hunt (who brought you the public domain The Works page designer programs), MTOS was discussed a few months back in my column. At that time, it was an experimental free distribution demo. A new demo has been distributed, along with sales information about the current MTOS, being distributed for $15 through DataQue, 3308 Park Avenue West, P.O. Box 134, Ontario, OH 44862.

Simply stated, MTOS allows specially written programs to reside simultaneously in your 8bit, each doing its own work as the CPU is switched among them. Ultimately, this would allow many more options in the use of the computer, since some tasks could be running background like a terminal program, downloading a big file while you word process or play a game. Or, internal print-spooling could release your computer for other useful work while the printer churns out a long document. As with any computer project, the possibilities are endless if you have the right tools. MTOS is growing into one of those tools. But don't expect to buy MTOS and run it. MTOS is more like a DOS or developers' package, and only a few example programs are included. You are expected to write your own, using the information in the complete but convoluted documentation.

Features at this point include the ability to run up to four tasks (programs) on a 128K machine, up to six in 256K. Both BASIC and binary programs can be running at the same time. Your screen and keyboard can be switched to any one job at a time, while all run. Inter-task messaging (like output from your word processor into your printer handler) is available. Task skipping and task priority are controllable, and re-prioritizable. All DOS's are usable, and SpartaDOS users will have some access to batching and command line processes within each task.

Sounds great? It is quite an accomplishment, but not without costs. The actual CPU of the computer can only do one task at a time, so MTOS slices time and has the CPU do each task for a few clock cycles, then moves to the next task resulting in slow performance on CPU intensive programs! The delay between a keypress and the "take" can be long if the program application is not set up to accomodate the process. Still, the potential for new programs designed as modules for mix-and-match under MTOS is exciting... they are just not here yet. MTOS should be seen as an experimental new operating environment, not as a product in itself. Futher development may include a new cpu, perhaps the 65C802, to speed up the Atari and make each task fly.

In any case, if you are still interested in getting MTOS after hearing all this, you are just the person Tom Hunt wants. If you aren't a programmer, you would be better off waiting a while, and paying more for some finished applications of MTOS.

The Programmer's Pal by Chuck Steinman, is $20 and marketed by DataQue. The idea behind Pal is tables and calculations should be available to the programmer at all times, even in the middle of doing something else on the computer. IBM and other larger computers can do this with various resident utilities, but our 8bits are just too busy. Some DOSes and BASICs provide some parameter support, but Pal attempts to go further... with mixed success.

Pal six functions, each with its own screen. Press CONTROL/4, and the translation table appears... showing a scrolling table showing equivalents in decimal, hex, Atascii character, internal key character, and the 6502 mnemonic for machine language programming. (For each funtion, control/0 (zero) gets you back to wherever you were.) Control/5 brings up a screen showing the current BASIC pointers, including values for RUNSTAK, MEMLO, MEMHI, VNTP, STARP, and more.

Control/6 gives you a "16bit calculator" with logical functions. Control/7 lets you examine any one sector selected from the disk in drive one. Control/8 will allow you to scroll up or down through the memory of the entire computer. Control/9 gives the hardware register equates, again displayed in hex and decimal.

Remember all this is resident behind whatever you happen to be doing at the time. Sounds pretty good, eh? Well, there are some limits. For example, the sector display is single density only. Oh, you *have* to be using BASIC, and when you go to DOS for anything, although PAL will work there just as well as out in BASIC, you must return to BASIC by jumping to address $A000. And you can't use any application... or DOS... that uses the RAM under the BASIC ROM.
Yes, PAL gives you a lot of good information for use in machine language programming... but only if you are using BASIC at the time, and not if you are using SpartaDOS (which uses the same area that PAL lives).

Still, if Programmer's Pal sounds like it would answer a problem you are having, it is flashy and seemingly reliable. It's a neat piece of work, no doubt, but now that I know what I have to give up to use it, I'm not likely to load Programmer's Pal again.

Chuck Steinman should figure out something else to use his slick resident screen-swap idea. Maybe something cute or useful for beginning programmers to look at while learning to use BASIC. As it is, a couple of charts lying next to the computer would do almost as well, without the limitations.

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ST Notes: SwitchBack From Alpha Systems

review by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

Switch/Back $69.95
Software version 1.3
Needs: 1MB of memory, or 512K and Polydisk

Another new product from Alpha Systems? Sheesh guys, come on. First they introduce Color Computereyes by Digital Vision (a major breakthrough in video digitizers for the ST), then they offer Polydisk (a hardware ramdisk that plugs into your cartridge port -- even though everyone said you couldn't write to the cartridge port). Then they develop the most advanced sound digitizers available for the ST (Digisound and Digisound Professional)! They can't possibly have another great product for the ST...or can they?

After seeing an ad for Switch/Back (and reading all of the claims made for said product), I called Alpha Systems and ordered my own personal copy. As I patiently awaited my new toy, I couldn't help but daydream about all of the things Alpha Systems promised:

* Load two or more programs on your ST and instantly switch between them.
* Switch back to a previous point in a program.
* Backup protected disks as normal TOS files.
* Run protected programs from your hard drive.
* Pause any software.

How could one product do all of these things? Being the skeptic that I am, I reasoned the claims were slightly exaggerated, but if the product even did half of the above, it would be worthwhile! My patience was rewarded as Switch/Back arrived the next day (it's a good thing too, I'm really not a very patient person).

The Switch/Back package includes a manual, a disk, and a piece of hardware that plugs into the ST printer port. The Switch/Back module looks like a gender changer with a small button on top. After plugging the Switch/Back module into your ST, you simply plug your printer cable into the Switch/Back module. Your printer will never know the module is there!

With the hardware installed, it's time to take Switch/Back for a test drive. To use Switch/Back, you've got to install the Switch/Back software. This is accomplished by merely booting your ST with the Switch/Back disk. When you first boot up, you'll see the message Press Reset on your screen. Pressing reset causes a reboot (naturally), but this time the message "Switch/Back software version 1.3 installed" is displayed, followed shortly by the GEM desktop. The Switch/Back software is now memory resident on your ST, and simply pressing the button on the Switch/Back module will activate it.

Sounds easy doesn't it? Try getting to that button on a Mega ST...it's extremely difficult! I ended up making a 2ft straight extension cable to move the Switch/Back module out within reach.

Before getting into all of the features of Switch/Back, let me tell you how it works. At boot time, the Switch/Back software splits your computer in two or more equal sections of memory. One section (called the main memory section) is used for the program currently running. The other section (called the buffers) are used to store separate images of your computer. When you capture with Switch/Back, you capture everything (the registers, the screen, *all* programs in memory) and an exact image of your computer is stored in one of the buffers! Since it is an exact image of your computer, it works with just about anything...not just "well-behaved programs." (Another program, The Juggler, by Michtron, is very limited and doesn't work.)

You control how Switch/Back splits up your memory by the program in the AUTO folder. The program initially in the auto folder is called SW_BACK.PRG, and it divides your computer into 512K sections (two on a 1 MB machine, four on a 2 MB machine, etc.). Alpha Systems also gives you other programs as follows: SW_256.PRG (256K sections), SW_512.PRG (same as SW_BACK.PRG), SW_1MEG.PRG (1 MB partitions - you must have at least 2MB), and SW_2MEG.PRG (2 MB partitions - you must have 4 MB). The smaller the partition used, the smaller the save file will be. There isn't a whole lot of stuff that runs using 256K partitions, but if your software does run in 256K, then you can have four applications loaded in

your 1 MB machine! OK, now we've installed the hardware and the software, let's try out something simple like alternating between two programs.

First, we load in Program #1. Since I want to do some word processing, we'll load in 1st Word Plus. Don't load in any programs from your AUTO folder (other than SW_BACK.PRG) or any desk accessories unless you really need them. Remember, Switch/Back saves an image of everything in your computers memory -- the more things loaded, the larger the resulting file.

Now we want to load in Program #2...but first we have to capture Program #1 to a buffer. Simply tap the button on the Switch/Back module. The program will "freeze" on the screen. The program will remain paused until you either tap the space bar or capture it by typing "c." We'll type "c" and whatever is in the main memory section will be captured to buffer #1. It's that easy! If you have more than 1 extra buffer (like I do on my Mega), simply type the number of the buffer you want to capture to before the "c" -- i.e. "3c" captures to buffer #3.

Now quit 1st Word Plus normally, and you're back to the desktop. Tapping the button again and typing "a" will alternate buffer #1 and the main memory section, thus bringing up 1st Word Plus at the exact spot where it was captured! Tap and type "a" again, and you're back at the desktop! You can easily alternate from 1st Word Plus to the desktop to format a disk, get a disk directory, or run another program! You can alternate between as many programs as you've got buffers! In addition to alternating between programs, you can also restore a program to any previously captured position. Tap and type "r" (or "nr" where n = buffer #), and the program will restart at the point at which it was captured! This is a great feature for gamers! It's almost like having unlimited lives! Keep recapturing the game as you progress, and when you die, simply restore to your last saved position.

Another feature of Switch/Back is the ability to save protected programs as standard TOS files. Let's say you want to back up a heavily protected game. If you can get a directory of the disk, then you can probably back it up (If you can't get a directory, then it's probably a "pure" boot disk, and you'll need a Polydisk to back it up -- more on that later). Install Switch/Back as normal, then run the program. When the program reaches a point where it has already checked for protection, capture it! To save the program, exit back to the desktop (if there's no exit, then simply press Reset -- yes, the Switch/Back buffers remain intact during a reset!) and run SW_BUF.PRG. You'll be greeted with a dialog box with three selections -- Load Buf, Save Buf, and QUIT. Selecting Save Buf gives us a file selector box in which we enter the name of our new file -- in this case GAME.BUF. The captured buffer is saved. That's it. To run the saved program simply run SW_BUF.PRG and select Load Buf. You'll get another dialog box with three options -- Load Buf, Load Go, and Cancel. Selecting Load Buf presents us with a file selector box. Clicking on GAME.BUF will load the previously saved program into the buffer, and all we have to do to run it is to alternate to it! The Load Go option automatically loads AND runs the program -- what could be easier? Since the saved files are standard TOS files, you can store several programs on a disk and even run them from your hard drive!

If you can't get a working backup (some programs seem to flush Switch/Back out of memory), then you can always fall back on the Archive feature. To archive a disk, you've got to have a backup program (like ProCopy) capable of backing up the disk. You run your backup program like normal, except when it asks you to insert the destination disk, you use Switch/Back to perform a capture. Now we save the buffer as a file and store it on a normally formatted disk. When we want to restore the program, simply load the file back into a buffer, and let the copy program pick up where it left off -- writing out the destination disk!

Switch/Back also offers you keyboard commands to perform a warm or cold boot on your ST. All of the features listed above are available on a standard 1 MB ST. This is a really useful package at a decent price.

Alpha Systems has done it again -- another great product! If this was the end of the review, I'd have to say -- "Run out and buy Switch/Back, it's dynamite!"...But wait there's more! (No, you don't get a free set of Ginsu Knives if you act now.)

Switch/Back offers full support for the Polydisk, Megadisk, and Ultradisk. If you've got a 512K system, and a Polydisk, then Switch/Back will act as if it's on a 1 MB ST. On any other system, the Polydisk is simply available as another buffer (called 'P'). The Switch/Back software automatically detects the presence of the Polydisk, and when you run SW_BUF.PRG, you'll get a dialog box with the selections - RAM, POLYDISK and QUIT. This allows you to either load or save RAM or the Polydisk.

Using a Polydisk also allows you to back up "pure" boot disks! The problem with these types of disks is that they boot immediately and you have no way of loading in the Switch/Back software. Alpha Systems gets around this by installing the Switch/Back software on the Polydisk, and loading in SW_BACK from the Polydisk any time the system is booted!

This really does work! I've successfully backed up Dungeon Master and Oid's (neither of these programs can be currently backed up with any of the commercial backup programs).

Now that the review is done, I can't just say "Run out and buy Switch/Back"... I've got to say "Run out and buy Switch/Back *and* a Polydisk!!"

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SWAP – Switch back lets you load just about any two programs into your ST and switch instantly between them. It works with games, business programs, utilities, compilers, etc. Although only one program is running at a time, the other is available instantly, right where you left off.

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Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

CACE

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community. The membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to MAM and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1pm to approx. 4pm, in the basement of the East Side Lounge, 2214 E Ganson, Jackson, MI.

New Goals from the Board

The CACE club is defunct as we know it now. The main reason is CACE values to the majority of the members do not meet the needs of those members. There are two things to consider. There has been a significant reduction in new 8bit computers and software. Second is the type of person using the Atari. The people now involved directly in CACE are not the same type of users the majority of CACE members are. The members are the type of user mainly interested in the software operation and not the details on how the software operates. In this light, the club needs to become purely a service group. The type of services to be provided are: clarification of operating manuals; provide details not included in the manual; build hardware and/or software for the cost of parts; customize non-commercial software; provide specialized software and/or specific input to existing software that will supply user needs. All these things will be implemented on the basis that we are typically dealing with members whose only interest is to use their computer.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

Anyone out there upset with the lack of computer product support for your Atari, not just in town (it's particularly bad here in Jackson), but even in the mail order houses. What can you do about it you say? At the end of "The Ever-changing Marketplace" article in the May Antic, Nat Friedland has asked us to write to Uncle Jack and tell him about our woes. The first thing you should put in your letter is the addresses of the stores that you would like to see carry Atari products.

Well, you people are in luck. I just happen to have two such addresses right in front of me which I'll share with you. The first is Amity Computer Center Inc., 759 W. Franklin St., Jackson, MI 49201. This next store is one which a large amount of you probably bought Atari products from in the past. Sid Young's, 212 N. Jackson St., Jackson, MI 49201. Write in to Jack, if he doesn't know you're out there, he's not going to help us. Without Atari behind us, we're not going to get more programs on our computers. While you're at it, tell Jack what it is you would like him to do so that you will buy more Atari products.

His address is: Jack Tramiel, Atari Corp., 1196 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086. The more letters he receives, the more support we as Atari users will get. I've sent my letter, how about you sending yours?

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to MAM, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships and so on, to: PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901. General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The S.T. INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month -- the 8bit SIG on the third Saturday -- at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right side. Park in the gated lot just past the building. Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

President's Corner by Leo Sell

The drought of 1988. Might be an appropriate description of the Atari market these days. More and more people contact me wondering where to go for sales or service of Atari computers and peripherals. Unfortunately, I am at as much of a loss as they are. Support is hard to find. As it has been for a long time, user groups like CHAOS are the best hope for Atari owners. Got an offer in the mail today that may be of interest to you ST owners. No Frills Software has extended an offer to CHAOS members, giving us 1/3 off of prices through the month of August. The products seem to be primarily PrintShop Graphics disks ported over to PrintMaster. I'll have the catalog at the meeting for you to look over.

The August ST meeting *will not* be at MSU. It is being replaced by a Midi-Maze party. Everyone is invited. It will be on the 2nd Saturday, 10 a.m., at the Capitol Federal, E. Lansing Branch, 250 East Saginaw (East of Abbot). Park at the back of the lot -- use the side door. The August 8bit meeting is replaced by the CHAOS picnic at my home, 1807 Hamilton, Okemos, 12 noon. I'll fire up the grill. You need to bring a piece of meat to cook, a passing dish, lawn chair(s) (families are invited), and whatever you care to drink.

The CHAOS Download by John Nagy

SysOp of The CHAOS BBS (517) 371-1106

Summer takes its toll on BBS participation too, but that means better access when you DO want it. A stroll through our messages bases reveals continuing dialogs between programmers in Canada, users in Utah, and vendors in California... and you. Heck, if these guys are calling long distance to visit CHAOS, you certainly ought to try it free. We had quite a bit of trouble with our MIO (we think) recently. All we can tell for sure is that we suddenly started logging impossible errors and crashed steadily for two weeks, and we are now OK again. We are also likely to have an additional 10meg of online

storage by the time you see this. This should accent our support of ST users particularly. A recent poll of callers showed 60% are using 8bit products, 15% are using STs, and 25% use other machines. Quite a lot of foreigners for an all-Atari BBS!

Congratulations to Lt. Worf of the Starship Enterprise... he won our Star Trek adventure on the BBS. He correctly deduced Tasha Yar having sex with a dancing alien on the ship's turbolift would save the Enterprise from the scourge of the Neilsons. If you missed this game, sorry, it was wild and ran a full month! Keep in touch this summer (while MAM takes a break) as well as all year long with "ZMagazine", online at the CHAOS BBS. An 8bit issue and an ST issue each week packed with the latest news of the Atari world. All for the cost of a phone call.... Visit us soon and often.

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

GAG Presidents Report by Jerry Cross

I hope you folks are enjoying your long summer. I know I am. It's nice to have a month or two of not having any Atari Business to take care of. Not much news for this month. It's going sort of slow putting out the catalog update, but we are still working in it. The FACTS BBS has gone multi-line. I am now using the Nite-Lite BBS interface/software, and now have 3 seperate phone lines hooked up. Give it a try! See you all in the Fall!

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari Personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG Meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Fline. Meetings begin at 6:30PM. During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday workshop for second shift workers. All are welcome. Membership in GAG includes a subscription to MAM and access to our library of PD software, hardware, and magazines. Membership is $15 a year.
Meeting Dates:
July-August, No meetings!
September 14 General Meeting
September 24 Saturday Workshop
Information:
Jerry Cross 313-736-4544
FACTS BBS 313-736-3920

GKAUG ATARI GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus, corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $20/yr. President, Frank Fellheimer 657-6106. GKAUG BBS (616) 657-2665.

We had 12 members last meeting. We could see summer activities are underway, so I would expect attendance to be a bit slack. We had a very short demo on Font Craft because I forgot to bring a joystick to drive it with. We discussed a new modification for the Avatex 1200 modem which I will report on later. My modem disengages before it reads the carrier signal... most annoying. The big deal here is Dale is running his own BBS: (616) 372-1082, operating hours are 10pm to 8am. This system will not receive any of your programs without proper notification. It will be used for messages to the librarian for member requests for disks. Dale is also making a trip to Florida and hopes to access some other programs from a club there.

Our BBS has undergone some changes. We are still looking for new title screens for the BBS. Those can be put on the BBS and we will sort through them. Hopefully, everyone will get a month online if we get enough. The Animator program is available on the BBS. It's simple to use.

Member listing were passed out and we had an ST user there this time...but no ST. We also have some ST programs coming which are prepared for the BBS... so look for them. Our lease for Kalamazoo College has been renewed for another year. We will be starting up again in September. Next Meeting: Analog Disks #62.63; demo Font Craft by PineCraft Ent.; Librarian Report; opening ceremonies for September Meeting of GKAUG.

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS', Michigans only! 'ST' only Users Group I ♥ my ST!

General Meeting: first Thursday (every month) at 6 p.m. until 9. Meetings are held at Athens High School, Troy, room 1506, 4333 John R. 1/10th of a mile north of Wattles (17 Mile) Rd. GLASS can be contacted at PO Box 99737, Troy, MI 48099.

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meeting: September 7, 1988, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W., Time: 6:30 P.M. George Nosky, President/Treasurer , (616)942-1527, 2440 Parkridge Dr. S.E. Grand Rapids, Mi. 49506

President's Comments By George Nosky

Well, here we are half-way through the summer. I wonder if we will have had any rain by the time this is published! I don't know about you, but I'm not anxious to get our electric or water bills.

GRASS welcomes three new members David Bear and Lee Collins, from Wyoming, and Tom Moore. It's good to have all of you. As you know, we have continued to meet throughout the summer. We have averaged approximately 12 to 15 members per meeting.

At the June meeting, Greg Williams provided us with a very informative demo of the ICD Multi I/O. He also showed us the advantages that SpartaDos X has over Atari Dos 2.5. The combination of the two provides us eight-bitters with the speed and ease of manipulation few of us are used to. If enough people show interest in purchasing an ICD "box" I will try to get a group buy.

I'm sure you read Bill Rayl's news analysis column in the June issue of MAM. Bill reviews the Graphic Operating Environment (GOE) Merrill Ward has announced. Art Miller bought the demo and will show us how it works using an ST mouse plugged into an 8bit!

See you at the September meeting.

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine and may purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. Eight-bit disks are $3 and the ST disks are $4 to members. Dues for MACE are $20 per year and meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at the Southfield Civic Center, Room 115, at Evergreen and 10-1/2 Mile Roads. MACE can be reached at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037.

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: August 13, & September 17, 1988. Club dues are $20 per year. For this fee you get MAM, support for both the 8bits and STs, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8bit disks and 50 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1.00 each, and ST disks cost $2.00 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

STill to Come!

The month of August will be bringing us some exciting goodies! Marty Schmidt will demo NeoDesk, an alternative to the current desktop. Another interesting product is Shadow, from Antic Software. This program is designed to work with any GEM based telecommunications program and allows you to upload or download *while* you're doing something else! When the the demo is done, we'll be raffling off this great product!

RelicST to Relish!

June was election time. and there was excitement in the air. We were all prepared for a deluge of campaign promises from the two candidates for ST Disk Librarian, Al Jennings and Neil Demo. Neil shocked the entire assembly with "If nominated I will not run, and if elected I will not serve!" The officers for the next year are: President LeRoy Valley; Sec/Treasurer Marty Schmidt; ST Disk Libr Al Jennings; 8bit Disk Libr Ted Beauchamp; 8bit Editor Char Davis.

The 8bit and ST groups split up for the program demonstrations. Al Jennings put on a fine demonstration of Dungeon Master. Al had his saved game disk along to show us how to battle the ugly purple worms he found in level four. He had a bad day, because when he was finished the worms were smiling and there were four skeletons on the dungeon floor! The graphics in this game are outstanding. No wonder it is a bestseller.

Next John Ziechman showed Empire, a war game simulation. The graphics in Empire looked like character graphics on the 8bit. but playability was really good. The July meeting required a lot of towels...and not because of the heat either! LeRoy brought in his Mega ST, and caused a lot of drooling! Seriously though, many people at the club got their first look at a real Mega ST. To say it's a nice machine is an understatement! The keyboard is a vast improvement, and the speed of the desktop is considerably faster (this is NOT due to the blitter, but rather to the rewrite of the system ROMS).

After everybody got a chance to check out the Mega, we settled down to our demos. The first program was Laser C, by Megamax Inc. This package is a total rewrite of Megamax C, and everything was improved! The editor is a dream come true for programmers with features like auto-indent, revert back to last version, and full GEM-based word processing! LeRoy also showed us his disk of the month for the library. It included the latest Arcshell (1.96b) along with the latest version of Arc (5.21), a virus killer program, a ram disk that stores more than it should and Minimatic, a start up program!

Pieces of eight by Ted Beauchamp

The June meeting got off to a rough start. We had no demo scheduled, so we immediately started into developing the adventure game project. We decided to use a high school as the setting and require our character to complete a certain task in the different class rooms to receive a "grade" or credit. The school was mapped out and the task outlined. Then each volunteer was given several rooms to write up a description of and the commands that would be used to preform the task or gather objects, etc. The project is coming along better than we had anticipated.

I will attempt to run a limited access BBS. Call 686-8872 by voice between 6 PM and 11 PM. I will put up the BBS and you can try it out.

Attention, don't miss next month's meeting, LeRoy promised to bring in a box of 8bit stuff he got as closeout merchandise.

8bit Equipment Volunteers for August
Neil Demo Color TV
Ted Beauchamp Disk Drive
ST Equipment Volunteers for July:
Margaret Schmidt 1040 ST
Marty Schmidt Hard Drive
Paul Bork Monitor

Remember, if you're bringing equipment, please bring all of the necessary cables (such as power cords, monitor cords, mouses, etc.).

WAUG General Meeting 6/14/88

This was the Elections meeting. Here are the results: President Jon Brode; Vice President Howard Chu; Treasurer Dick Selke; Secretary Mike Olin; ST Librarian Russ Crum; 8Bit Librarian Mike Millage; Editor Mike Ranger. It looks like we've got a great crew in charge. After the elections we went about the business of searching for valuable software and hardware brought in.

WAUG members are going to be gathering at Hines Park on Sat. Aug. 13th. This will be a picnic for members and families. Directions will be handed out at the August meeting or on Molin's Den (313) 420-0407. At this point, nothing has been set for food, but bring your own drinks.

From the Treasurer: Our new member of the month was Jon Brode. Welcome! We also had two renewals, Bruce Moore and Jay Skotcher. These people know a good value when they see it. That's all for now, see you at the meetings! Dick Selke

Babbage -- The Language of the Future

(courtesy of the Santa Barbara ACE, Steve Parker, Author)

There are few things in this business that are more fun than designing a new computer language, and the very latest is Ada -- the Department of Defense's new supertoy. Ada, as you know, was designed to replace outmoded and obsolete languages such as COBOL and Fortran.

The problem is this cycle takes 20 to 30 years and doesn't start until we're really convinced present languages are no good. We can short-curcuit this process by starting on Ada's replacement now. Then, by the time we decide Ada is obsolete, its replacement will be ready.

The new generation of language designers has taken to naming its brainchildren after people rather than resorting to the unual acronyms. Pascal is named after the first person to build a calculating machine; Ada is named after the 1st computer programmer. As our namesake, we chose Charles Babbage, who died in poverty while trying to finish building the first computer. The new language is thus named after the first systems designer to go over budget and behind schedule.

Babbage is based on language elements that were discovered after the design of Ada was completed. For instance, CAR Hoare, in his 1980 ACM Turing Award lecture, told of two ways of constructing a software design: "One way is to make it so simple there are obviously no dificiencies and the other way is to make it so complicated there are no obvious deficiencies." The designers of Babbage have chosen a third alternative -- a language that has only obvious deficiencies. Babbage programs are so unreliable that maintenance can begin before system integration is completed. This guarantees a steady increase in the programming job marketplace.

Like Pascal, Ada uses "strong typing" to avoid errors caused by mixing datatypes. The designers of Babbage advocate "good typing" to avoid errors caused by misspelling the words in your program. Later versions of Babbage will also allow "touch typing" which will fill a long-felt need.

A hotly contested issue among language designers is the method for passing parameters to subfunctions. Some advocate "call by name" and others prefer "call by value." Babbage uses a new method -- "call by telephone." This is especially effective for long-distance parameter passing.

Ada stresses the concept of software portability. Babbage encourages hardware portability. After all, what good is a computer if you can't take it with you?

It's a good sign if you language is sponsored by the government. COBOL had government backing, and Ada is being funded by the Department of Defense. After much negotiation, the Department of Sanitation agreed to sponsor Babbage.

No subsets of Ada are allowed. Babbage is just the opposite. None of Babbage is defined except its extensibility -- each user must define his own version. To end the debate of large languages versus small, Babbage allows each user to make the language any size he wants. Babbage is the ideal language for the "me" generation. The examples that follow will give you some idea of what Babbage looks like.

Structured languages banned GOTOs and multiway conditional branches by replacing them with the simpler IF-THEN-ELSE structure. Babbage has a number of conditional statements that act like termites in the structure of your program:

WHAT IF -- used in simulation languages. Branches before evaluating test conditions.

OR ELSE -- conditional threat, as in "Add these two numbers OR ELSE!"

WHY NOT? -- executes the code in a devil-may-care fashion.

WHO ELSE? -- used for polling during I/O operations.

ELSEWHERE -- this is where your program really is when you think it's here.

GOING GOING GONE -- for writing unstructured programs. Take a random branch to another program. Does the work of 10 GOTOs.

For years, programming languages have used "FOR," DO WHILE" "DO UNTIL" to mean LOOP." Continuing with this trend, Babbage offers the following lood statements:

DON'T DO WHILE NOT -- this loop is not executed if the test condition is not false (or it's Friday afternoon).

DIDN'T DO -- The loop executes once and hides all traces.

CAN'T DO -- the loop is pooped.

WON'T DO -- the CPU halts because it doesn't like the code inside the loop. Execution can be resumed by typing "May I" at the console.

MIGHT DO -- Depends on how the CPU is feeling. Executed if the CPU is "up" and not executed if the CPU is "down" or its feelings have been hurt.

DO UNTO OTHERS -- used to write the main loop for timesharing systems so that they will antagonize the users in a uniform manner.

DO-WAH -- used to write timing loops for computer-generated music (Rag timing).

Every self-respecting language has a case statement to implement multiway branching. ALGOL offers and indexed case statement and Pascal has a labeled case statement. Not much of a choice. Babbage offers a variety of interesting case statements:

The Just-In-Case Statement -- for handling afterthoughts and fudge factors. Allows you to multiply by zero to correct for accidentally dividing by zero.

The Brief Case Statement -- to encourage portable software.

The Open&Shut-Case Statement -- No proof of correctness is necessary with this one.

The In-Any-Case Statement -- this one always works.

The Hopeless Case Statement -- this one never works.

The Basket Case Statement -- a really hopeless case.

The Babbage Language Design Group is continuously evaluating new features that will keeps its users from reaching any level of effectiveness. For instance, Babbage's designers are now considering the ALMOST EQUALS sign, used for comparing two floating-point numbers. This new feature "takes the worry out of being close."

As you can see, Babbage is still in its infancy. The Santa Barbara Chapter of the Babbage Language Design Group is seeking suggestions for this powerful new language and as the sole member of this sub-group (all applications for free membership stating your name, address and phone number will be accepted), I call on the computing community for help in making this dream a reality.

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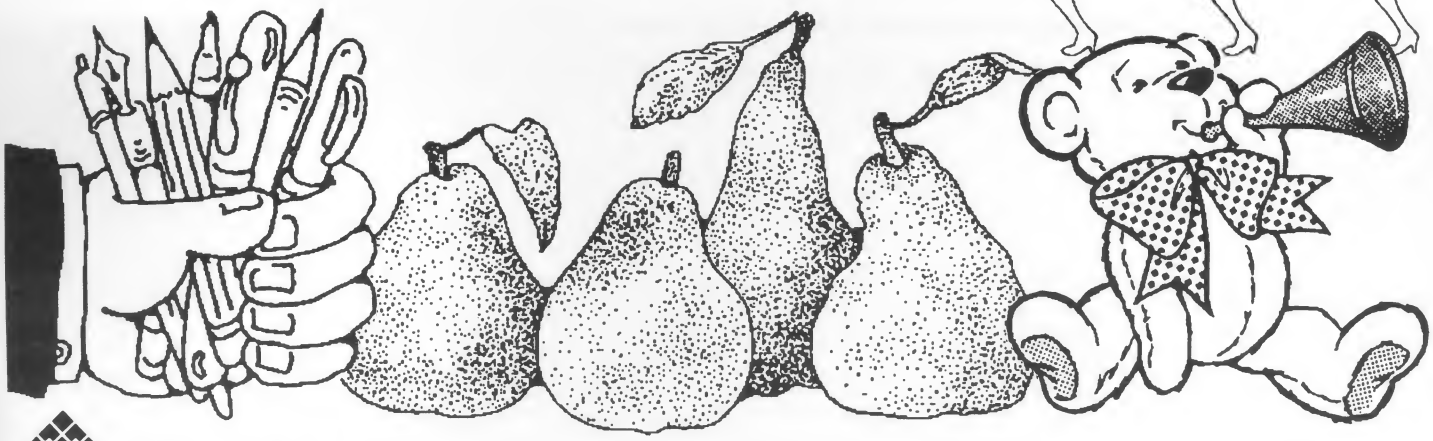

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Many people have asked which Mailing List program we use at Best Electronics, we currently use Super Mailer+ from Royal Software. Super Mailer program (D) $39.95

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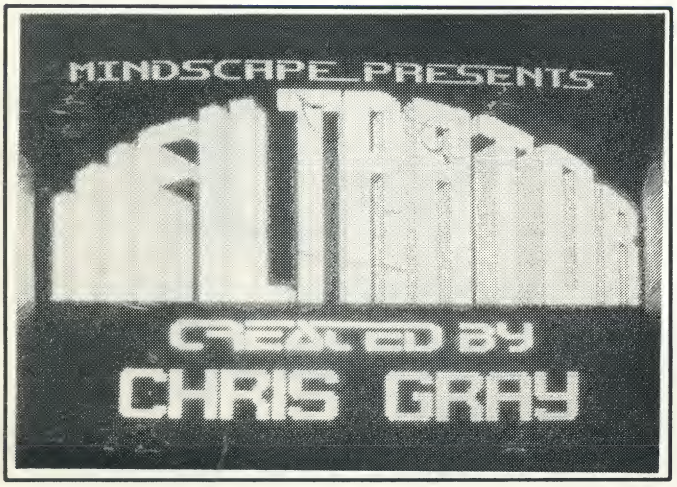
Michigan Atari Magazine

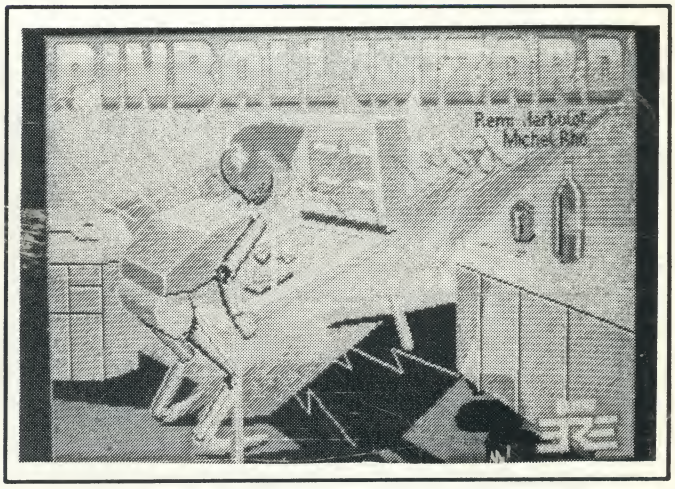
Your Atari Interface

Vol. 3 No. 8
Sept. 1988

Games



Games



Games

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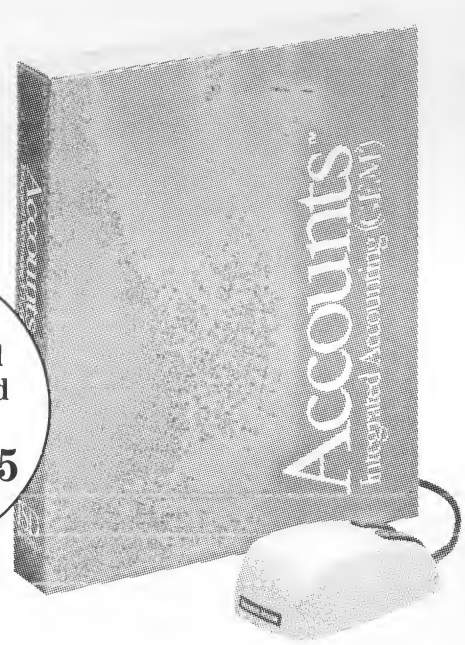

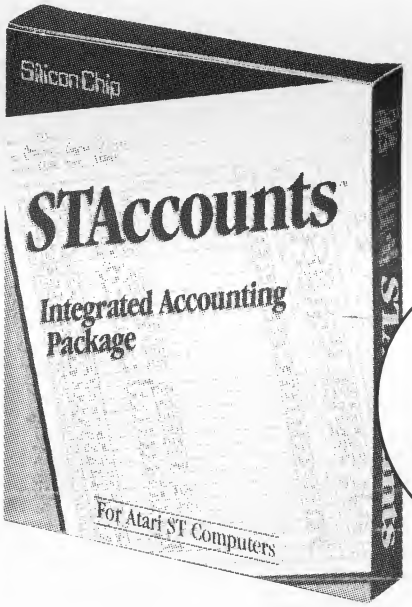

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MAM this Month

Features

Editorial Ramblings	2
From the Reader's Viewpoint	3
Atari News and Comment	4
Developing the Atari (Interview)	6
The Uninvited (ST)	8
Rampage (ST)	9
Infiltrator (8bit)	10
Out Run (ST)	11
Test Drive and Crazy Cars (ST)	12
DeathSword (ST)	14
Pinball Wizard (ST)	15
Shadow (ST)	16
Atari View 8 (8bit)	18
Flying the ST	19
STAccounts (ST)	20
Easy Hacking: 1050 Drive Select Switch (8bit)	23
Binary Maybe's	26

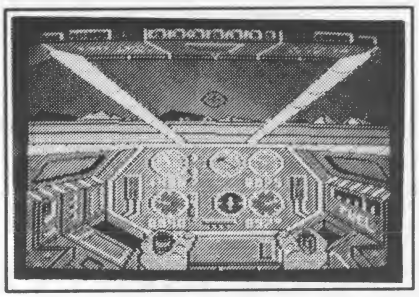
Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	28
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	28
GAG	(Flint, MI)	29
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	29
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	29
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	30
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	30
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	31
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	31

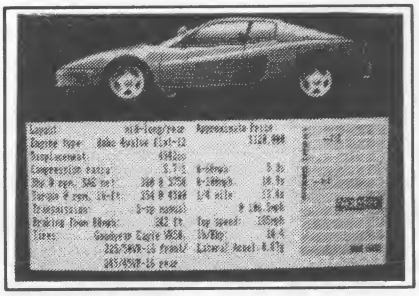
Advertisers

Unicorn Publications	5
Soft Trek	5
The Sterling Connection	7
Computer Concepts	9
State Street Computer	11
Tech Specialities	13
Joppa Computer Products	14
Xenia Research	17
Terrific Corporation	18
United Computer	18
Mars Merchandising	22
Alpha Systems	25
Migraph, Inc.	26
Astra Corporation	27
Brad Roltgen Enterprises	32
Omega Soft	32
ISD Marketing, Inc.	Inside Front Cover
Word Perfect Corporation	Inside Back Cover
Best Electronics	Back Cover

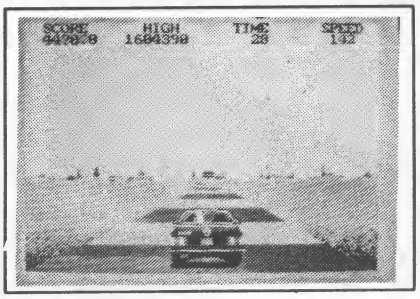
Volume 3, No. 8 September 1988



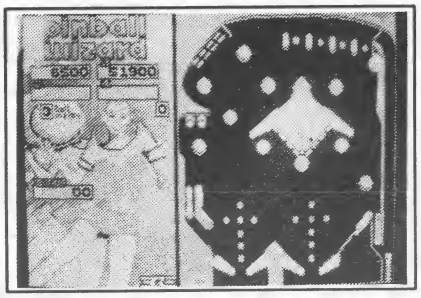
Infiltrator from Mindscape 10



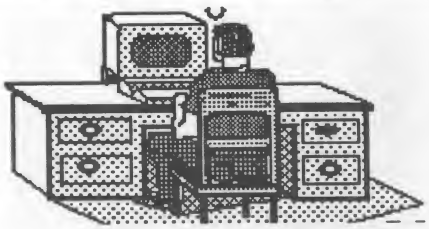
Test Drive from Accolade 12



Crazy Cars 12



Pinball Wizard 15



Editorial Ramblings

A welcome nip is in the evening air as we write this, reminding us Summer is fading and Fall is around the corner.

This month's Flying the ST from Allen Bargen blasts Soft-Logik Publishing. In all fairness to the makers of Publishing Partner Professional, Soft-Logik released what they are calling a "beta" version of the software because an informal poll of many registered owners indicated that was what the polled owners wanted. A post card was recently sent to all registered owners (a card that Mr. Bargen probably hadn't received at the time of his article). The card says "Please understand that we have sent this version to you so that you may familiarize yourself with the new features and how they work," though it is true that many of the features simply do not work at all. The card also states that the final version of the software will arrive within a month. It seems to me they have a lot of work to do if this software is going to be bugless within a month, but when Publishing Partner Professional is finished, it will be the best Desktop Publishing package available for *any* machine!

On a final note, to all members of user groups receiving MAM, if you move, be sure to notify your membership chairperson. The Postal Service does NOT forward 3rd-class mail unless you're willing to pay them to do so. One club has asked that we start using "Address Correction Requested" again, which means all nondeliverable magazines would be returned to us (and we pay 30 cents for each returned copy). The club requesting this is willing to pay for each return, but some other clubs do not wish to. So, the best solution is the most logical – if you move, let your club know! Your club officers will appreciate it and you won't miss your MAM. If you don't, your copy will be sent, only to be destroyed by the Post Office (heartless folk, eh?). At that point, your only recourse is to purchase another copy at cover price (MAM + 1st-class postage). This would end up costing you over three times as much for your MAM! Ouch.

Bill & Pattie Rayl

People Who Make It All Possible

Managing Ed: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Comic Strip: Steve Volker
Contributors: Allen Bargen, Bill Boles, Mike Bonkowski, Jerry Cross, Byron Johnson, John Nagy, Don Neff, Clinton Pierce, Bob Retelle, Gordon Totty and all the participating user groups.

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From the Reader's Viewpoint

Dear MAM,

This is in reply to the comments made in the August issue of MAM. Chris Miller made several good points, but I would like to point out a few of the bad ones also. My April column had only a one paragraph review on the MPP, so I could not give the whole story.

First, is the MPP an "excellent value?" Yes, you can buy one (used, since they don't make them anymore) for $25 or less. The one I own now was picked up for $5! Since MPP (now owned by Supra) is no longer in business, there is no place you can send it to be repaired. If you ever find a place, let me know. The one I have needs to be fixed.

In it's day, the MPP was an excellent value, but in today's age of high-speed, low-cost modems, it's simply not worth it. For as little as $75, you could get an Atari SX212 modem and quickly recover the cost difference in long distance calling, not to mention on-line charges to many pay systems.

On the other hand, you would save money by not having to purchase an interface, since the MPP connects into the joystick ports. But this in turn creates more problems. That "12 or 17 sector" handler may fit in some of the older basic programs like Amodem, but when you try to incorporate it into a powerful programs (like Express) you are in for a big chore. Express has the handler built into the code, and adding the MPP handler is no simple task.

It took many hours of hard work by a SPACE member just to come up with a handler for the SX212! What will future MPP owners do when more powerful terminal programs come out? Is it worth giving up features like powerful downloading protocals, remote calling and networking just to name a few? As for your comments about "relatively crash-free BBSes" you must know of something I don't. Sure, many BBS programs are loaded with bugs, but the MPP BBS programs I have seen were so bug-infested it was a daily chore to keep them running. I now have four different MPP programs in my library (all that I could find!), and none are worth the effort.

It is true that having the terminal program on cartridge is highly recommended, but the later versions of the MPP came with software on disk. If you could get an MPP with cartridge-based software, it might be worth the $25. I am impressed with the huge buffer space and the speed. But, again, with today's 8bit equipment, you are at a disadvantage. You can get a 130XE and using the ramdisk as a buffer, you won't notice much difference. For around $50 you can expand an 800xl to 256k!

Another point you made was "you could not use your printer with an XM 301 at the same time." This is not true! Any time you add non-Atari brand equipment to your system, you might create compatability problems. I am sure you are referring to using the PR:CONNECTION or some other non-standard interface with an XM301. It has been well-documented these devices tap into the computer's power supply, and, when operated together, create problems. However, if you use the Atari 850 interface and use the XM301 as the *last* device in the chain, you will have no problems. That is how I have my system set up. It is possible to purchase (or make) a 3-way I/O connector so you can daisy-chain your XM301 with other devices if necessary.

One last note, you mentioned that one of the features of the MPP is the ability to send a modem break, so you could access Merit. Although not available with the XM301 modems, (I think) it is a simple matter to do this with an 850 compatible interface. But systems like Merit are not available around the country, unfortunately, and software writers have no reason to incorporate modem breaks into their programs. This may be a feature of some interest to heavy Merit users, but I don't see it as a major selling point.

In conclusion, although the MPP may be an inexpensive way to get into telecommunications, I still recommend new users purchase a modem better supported by software developers, such as the XM 301 or even a Hayes compatable. If (and when) more powerful software is written for the 8bit systems, I do not believe the MPP systems will be supported.

Jerry Cross, President of GAG

Atari asks for User Groups Help

In the spring of 1987, Atari sent registered user groups a newsletter, the first in over a year. About six months later, Atari User Group Rep. Sandy Austin promised another newsletter as soon as she could get it out. Dated July/August '88, it finally came, but without Sandy who is no longer with Atari.

Who do you talk to at Atari now? Contact Cindy Claveran, new User Group Coordinator, who will be working with Newsletter Editor Elizabeth Shook. A series of AtariFests are among Cindy's projects. Be sure to get in contact with her at (408) 745-2569 if your user group wants to register with Atari and get on the correspondence list.

The new User Group News opens with an impassioned appeal to user groups to help Atari with marketing and promotion, citing that Atari has ceased selling through distributors and mail-order houses in the US. It goes on to say retail dealers are vital to a healthy Atari future, and user groups should take special effort to support them. "Some areas of the United States do not currently enjoy complete dealer coverage," understates the article. "User groups in these areas can help themselves by assisting Atari in setting up local distribution. Potential dealers will be more willing to carry the Atari product line if a friendly user base already exists in the area," the letter continues. "Refer independent computer dealers to Atari's dealer coordinator Kevin Janssen at (408) 745-2030."

The key word in this scheme is friendly. User group leaders I talked to across the country reacted uniformly in the negative when they heard Sam Tramiel's latest request that user groups be the spearhead for the growth of Atari. "We bent over backwards for them before with enthusiasm and hard work through the early AtariFests, contributing to the comeback of the 'New Atari', but what have they done for user groups? Very little that I can see," said Leo Sell, President of CHAOS.

"Big deal," echoed Los Angeles ACE President Bill Lurie. "Atari allowed user groups to order the first ST models...at full retail price, paid in advance...that's the last user group support I remember."

All user groups are being asked to re-register to become "Authorized" ACEs. "By registering and becoming an authorized ACE (Atari Computer Enthusiasts) organization, you can count on Atari recognition and support," says the newsletter. The new forms asks for, among other things, proof of membership to verify the group size meets the "minimum requirement," unspecified. Also asked is the "name of Atari retailer who will sponsor or offer affiliation." Several club officers, especially those whose groups are a hundred miles or more from an Atari dealer, felt that item was offensive.

Overall, the User Group News is a pleasant collection of items, and a welcome sign of long overdue attention to Atari clubs. I hope it becomes a continuing publication instead of the freak occurence it used to be, and that fears of "being used again" are dissolved by followup and responsiveness at Atari.

John Nagy, CHAOS

Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by Bill Rayl

It's been relatively quiet on the Atari Front, with a few notable exceptions. Atari has released their first User Group newsletter in quite some time, a welcome sign that is being clouded by Atari's User Group registration policy. (See John Nagy's discussion of this in "From the Reader's Viewpoint.")

Another chapter unfolds this month on the on-going Double-Sided disk drive dilemma. As reported last month, a shipment of 520STfms appeared in Atari's Federated stores with Double-sided drives, while other dealers continued to receive only Single-Sided drive 520s.

Atari has now begun shipping the DS drive systems to all dealers. One sour note, though; for dealers to upgrade any of the older systems, they will have to take two new systems for every one they wish to upgrade.

Also, if you bought a SS 520 STfm during the period Atari was selling the DS STs to Federated, Atari's policy is you got what you paid for. No upgrade will be available from Atari. Maybe your local dealer can help, assuming you have one!

AtariFests

Atari seems to be making an attempt at supporting Atari Fests again. Reportedly, Sig Hartmann is now in charge of Public Relations at Atari (it sure gets hard to keep track of job titles at Atari lately!). Sig has appointed Cindy Claveran as User Group Coordinator, a vacant position for some time. With these changes comes a renewed interest in AtariFests.

In fact, Sig Hartmann recently contacted MAGIC about putting on another show. In August, 1987, MAGIC, GAG and GLASS sponsored a successful Atari show in Southfield, MI. According to MAGIC's Newsletter Editor Mike Lechkun, an "Atari bigwig" is flying out to discuss the show on October 4th. The meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Italian Cultural Center, 28111 Imperial, Warren, MI, and MAGIC invites all interested people to attend.

In a move that can only be considered extremely bad taste, MAGIC is planning to charge 50 cents or $1 admission to attend this meeting! The meeting takes place on their normally scheduled meeting night, and MAGIC's meetings are generally open to all. But, in this case, MAGIC proposes to charge admission from the very people they are going to need assistance from if another show will occur. MAGIC can't pull off an AtariFest on their own, but if any other clubs want to get involved at this first meeting, they'll have to pay to do so? Hopefully, MAGIC will change the tune before October!

Diamond & GOE

On to brighter horizons! Diamond, the 8bit Atari ST-like operating system created by Alan Reeve of Reevesoft, is now shipping! In a rather surprising move, Merrill Ward will be marketing Diamond. In a recent phone conversation with Shelly Merrill, president of Merrill Ward, I was told that because of GOE's programmer missing contracted deadlines, the GOE project was dropped, and Merrill Ward and Reevesoft have entered into a marketing agreement for Diamond. "We're very committed to the Atari 8bit market," Merrill assured me. "Diamond is finished and will be shipping this month."

All you purchasers of the GOE demo disks -- have no fear! The $5 is applicable toward the purchase of Diamond or will be refunded if desired. For more info, contact Merrill Ward, 255 N El Cielo Suite 222, Palm Springs, CA 92262 (612) 320-5828.

ST Flippies?

In the ST world, Jez San, who wrote Star Glider and now Star Glider II, has found a way to allow the *same* disk to boot on both an ST and a Commodore Amiga. As a licensable technology, the Argonaught Disk Loader System is available for other developers, so we will no doubt see more of this in the future.

With this truly revolutionary system, *both* ST and Amiga graphics and sound routines are in the same program. Coupled with a "dual-formatted disk," the program is booted on either system. At bootup, the main program discovers the machine it's running on, and "patches its vectors accordingly." This potentially is a boon for software developers taking chances on the relatively new and small ST and Amiga markets. Great job, Jez!!

Pay Services

One last thing before we stop for this month. If you're like us and like to telecommunicate, than Delphi has an offer for you! When you sign up for their Advantage plan, your on-line charges are only $4.80 per hour -- cheaper than GEnie! The Advantage plans means you agree to be billed for 5 hours each month (a total of $24), so if you use a pay service more than 5 hours a month, this could be for you! One nice thing about Delphi is you're charged the same rate whether you call in at 300, 1200 or 2400 baud, unlike GEnie or CompuServe.

To sign up, call by modem to Delphi at (617) 576-0862. Fill out the application form, and then go into the Using Delphi area where you can select the Advantage Plan. Hope to see you on-line soon!

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Developing the Atari
An Interview
with Charles Johnson

The first in a series of talks with Atari developers, this interview focuses on Charles Johnson, programmer of many notable shareware efforts including ArcShell, Mouse-Ka-Mania and DeskManager.

Currently, Charles, 35, is working on a GDOS replacement called G+Plus with John Eidsvoog, 39, his partner "in crime" at CodeHead Software. John has written such programs as GenPatch ST and HybriSwitch for Hybrid Arts.

This interview took place recently on Delphi with Charles calling in from Los Angeles and John calling from North Hollywood, California.

MAM> Welcome John and Charles! CodeHead Software is about to release the GDOS replacement...when it is due to ship?

Charles> John, you want to field this one? <grin>

John> Well, we just printed a draft copy of the manual yesterday. We hope we can get it ready before the end of the week (next week).

MAM> Charles, How is your GDOS replacement "better?"

Charles> It's better in several ways. First, many people notice a drastic slowdown when they use Atari's GDOS (which we can prove by the way). G+Plus does not suffer from any perceptible slowdown.

John> We can also reload different ASSIGN.SYS files from the desktop, even automatically through the use of an 'Installation' file.

Charles> Which lets you install a new set of fonts and device drivers without the need to reboot your computer.

John> So you can just quit one GDOS program and immediately run another, requiring a different ASSIGN file.

Charles> I want to emphasize that G+Plus is totally compatible with Atari GDOS as well. In fact, we used G+Plus and Timeworks Desktop Publisher to prepare our manual.

MAM> Is CodeHead going to market G+Plus itself?

Charles> Yes, we are. We will also be distributed by Logical Choice for Computing who will have a toll-free number, 800-992-5232, for charge card orders. Or you can order directly from us at: CodeHead Software, PO Box 4336 North Hollywood, CA 91607

MAM> The program went through a pile of name changes. Can you give a short synopsis on the history of that, Charles?

Charles> Yep, that was a real mess, all right. The first name we came up with was "GDOS_LF" which stood for GDOS Liberation Front. For obvious reasons, that didn't seem like the wisest name to use <grin>.

Next, we picked A/DOS ST, but found out an independent IBM software company had dibs on that name already. In fact they made Atari change the name of their 8bit DOS, which was going to be called ADOS originally. Our *expensive* lawyer advised us not to tempt fate. Next (whew) we chose the name G-WIZ (which I still like, actually...oh well), but found out almost immediately that it was used by Supra for a C64 printer interface they market. So now, after all that, we've finally settled on G+PLUS. <slumps exhaustedly to the ground>.

John> Yeah. <Sigh of relief> We hope it's not this hard to find a name for the next product.

MAM> How much is G+Plus going to sell for?

Charles> $34.95. You have to have that .95 in there.

MAM> First you, Charles, then John...how did you get into programming?

Charles> Actually, Pattie, I'm a musician by trade. Programming is a relatively new sideline (quickly taking over more and more of my time). I bought an Atari 400 when they first came out to play video games when I wasn't on the road. Then I got the Atari BASIC cartridge for it and I was totally hooked. From there it's a non-stop downhill slide into the nightmare, nether-world of computer programming <grin>.

John> I'm also a musician, been one all my life -- piano and keyboards. I first started in 1980 with an Apple II+. Learned a little BASIC and started writing some programs for music. I wrote a program for film composers, called Film Music Toolkit. Next were a couple of MIDI programs. These I sold myself through the company Eidco Resources. Naturally, when the MIDI-ed Atari ST came along, I got one right away and was soon hooked on 68000 assembly language.

MAM> Sounds impressive! How did you both meet?

Charles> Hmmm....how did we meet, anyway? It was through another musician/programmer friend of ours, Barnaby Finch, who plays for George Benson. (Among others.) He's also an ST programmer but on the road so much we hardly see him.

MAM> Wow. So, what comes after G+Plus? Any projects in the works?

Charles> Hehe...actually, I've been raving to John about this idea for a multi-accessory loader, but right now it's just a glimmer in my eye.

John> Maybe we shouldn't spill too much to the "press"...hehe. Well anyway, at the rate we've put out G+Plus, we might have this one out before you even get to press. G+Plus was just a glimmer in our eyes in early May!

Charles> We're beginning to see why programmers sign away 85% of their royalties. There's a lot to take care of.

John> We also plan to release a commercial disk with a dozen or so utilities that we use all the time.

MAM> Charles, will you continue to produce "shareware?"

Charles> As for shareware, I'm not sure. The response has not been exactly overwhelming, although it does seem to be picking up recently. But I know for a fact more than 28 people are using my ARC Shell program, just to name one. That's how many donations I've received...28.

MAM> Charles, do you feel the Networks should compensate for shareware they have in download areas? Or just the end-users?

Charles> Hmmm. I haven't considered that idea before. Perhaps, although I think you'd have a really hard time convincing the networks of that!

John> But on the other hand, the networks are helpful in distribution.

MAM> Overall, what are your impressions of programming the ST?

Charles> I like programming the ST. I work almost exclusively in assembly language, and the 68000 is a really elegant, powerful design. I'm still amazed by its sheer speed.

MAM> What was the toughest obstacle you've had to overcome in your programming endeavors?

Charles> There are too many to list, believe me! The problem with the ST has always been its operating system. There are some unclimbable walls in GEM. My Macro Mouse program, which records all mouse movements and keypresses, was perhaps the most complicated code I've had to write.

The system really doesn't want you to do this kind of stuff, except on its own terms. Which are too limited. I had to solve all kinds of problems having to do with installing and removing interrupt code, without damaging the ST's somewhat delicate OS balance.

MAM> Have you had any "direct" dealings with Atari as a developer?

Charles> Yes, I'm a registered Atari developer. I've been encouraged recently by signs of increased developer support. For a long time, the support was fairly miniscule. Atari has new documentation, new help on-line and at their phone numbers. Atari finally documented the Line A "negative offset" variables, for one thing. They're offering a 68881 math coprocessor board to developers now, as well.

MAM> I didn't know the 68881 was being shipped to developers. That has been a very-much-asked-about topic.

Charles> Well, I haven't asked about it myself, but the latest Atari Forum developer's newsletter says the card is available to developers now.

MAM> Well, I've about run out of questions. One more...why is your cat the most intelligent in the world?

Charles> Because he's _my_ cat! <big grin>

Charles Johnson is also the West Coast Editor for Analog and ST-Log Magazines and contributes many programs and articles to ST-Log.

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The Uninvited
A *Graphic* ST Adventure

Review by Pattie Snyder-Rayl

The evolution of the text adventure, as any History book will tell you, is a simple process. The first were only TEXT text adventures. But, as computers and users became more sophisticated, the wonderful world of graphics came into play. This brought into being the GRAPHIC text adventure.

Game designers were always striving for better ways to interface the text adventure with the user, leading to full-sentence parsers (the program holding the language information for the computer). Gamers were still frustrated with the "I don't understand the word..." problem. If only there was a way to play a text adventure and communicate with the computer without using English!

Along comes Mindscape to the rescue with it's GEM/graphic adventures. One such game is The Uninvited. This revolutionary game system uses GEM windows for all the English word commands.

You examine an object by clicking on the picture and then on the Examine button. You can do the same thing by double-clicking on the object. The routine is the same for Open, Close, Go and Operate.

No longer is the player frustrated by a game that doesn't understand English -- or typos -- and you can get down to playing and solving the game.

The premise for the Uninvited is simple: you regain consciousness to find you've just been in a car accident, leaving you stranded near a foreboding house. (Sound like any black and white movies you've seen?)

Your younger brother was in the car with you, but has since vanished into thin air. Your object is to find a phone to call a cab, locate your brother and somehow rid the house of its evil atmosphere.

The only clues you have are picked up along the way as you search the house room by room for the phone. There is an evil presence in the house which tries to take hold of your mind.

The house doesn't seem to be inhabited by any *living* things, but there are a lot of pitfalls to get caught in!

Speaking from experience, I'd suggest saving the game often. It's easy to die several times before getting very far in The Uninvited. There's nothing worse than gathering a lot of little items and then dying before you saved the game with those items as part of your Inventory.

Your Inventory is a GEM window, but instead of text, the window holds the objects in graphic form. The spell book you see as part of the room is show exactly the same way in your Inventory window. So far, I have not found a limit to the number of things you can carry.

The graphics are detailed and, sometimes, gruesome. The face on the Scarlet O'Hara figure was very startling the first time I saw it, and a ghost holding its severed head by the hair while

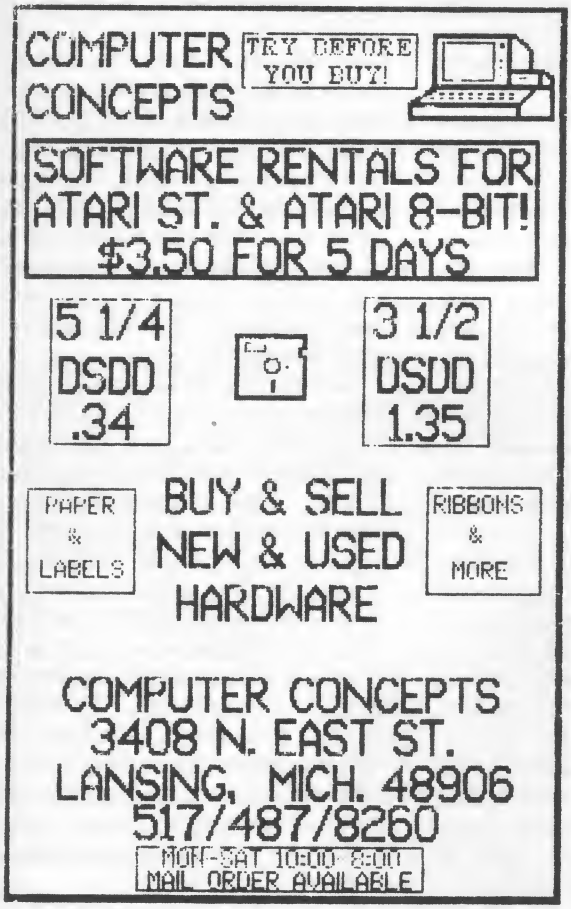
the head talks to you, is just one of the bone-chilling sights in store for you.

Another way the game keeps your attention is through sounds like your car exploding or roars of thunder from the storm outside. A smattering of maniacal laughter is an added touch when you die. The sounds aren't completely true-to-life, but they do keep you on the edge of your seat!

I like The Uninvited. I've always enjoyed text adventures, but get frustrated by the language problem. Mindscape has take this problem totally out of the game -- in fact, you can't even use the keyboard at all! I also enjoy mystery/horror stories, and The Uninvited fits that description. A bit of the occult is thrown in as well.

If you're looking for something different to play, give this software a try. I think you'll enjoy it. The Uninvited is available from Mindscape and from several MAM advertisers. Give them a call for current prices. You need a color system with at least one single-sided drive.

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Rd.
Northbrook, IL 60062
(312)480-7667.



Rampage from MediaGenic

Reviewed by Bill Boles (MACE)

Like many of you out there, I grew up watching dubbed-in Japanese monster films, sometimes staying up as late as 3:30 a.m. just to watch Godzilla or Rodan tear up the city of Tokyo for the 287th time. However, over the years the local TV stations have phased-out late-night horror flicks in favor of more pedestrian (ie. boring) fare. Then last year, I discovered an arcade game called Rampage at a small shopping mall arcade. At last, a game that lets me act out the part of my favorite screen creatures! I was hooked.

Activision (now called MediaGenic) has produced an ST version of this great game, and it is a totally faithful copy of the coin-op. The rules of Rampage are simple: one to three players take on the personna of George the Gorilla, Lizzie the Lizard, or Ralph the Wolf. The players then set to work destroying one of 50 cities. There is much to do in this game. Not only do you have to smash buildings, look out for danger, mash cars and tanks on the ground, but keep yourself well fed!

Using the joystick, you may climb buildings, jump, and punch left, right, up, and down. As you destroy buildings, you will sometimes find objects hidden behind the windows. These range from people and other food, to bathtubs, beds, bottles of poison and highly electrical appliances which when eaten or touched, will lower your health. Don't let your health get too low, or your monster will shink into a tiny creature which meekly shuffles it's way off screen and costs you a life. Other things to look out for are tanks firing missiles, army choppers, vigilantes who throw home-made bombs from windows, and an obnoxious kid who drops firebombs which destroy buildings (you don't want to be on top of a building when this guy shows up).

This is not to say that all is doom and gloom for the player. There are many ways to score in this game. First of all, those pesky tanks, cop cars, and other annoyances can be smashed for points. Quite often you will find victims waving for help from a window which can be grabbed for a quick snack.

And for a big bonus, when another player's monster shinks into the tiny creature, you may eat it for a quick 1000 points. One more hazard to watch out for is water. When a player loses his third life, the others continue until all have died, at which point the game ends. Sad to say however, the game does not save the high scores to disk.

In all, this has got to be the best arcade game yet for the ST. It is exactly like it's coin-op counterpart both in graphics and sound. I for one hope MediaGenic comes out with many more such high quality programs. If you find a copy of this game at your local dealer, make a dive for it. You'll be glad you did.

Mindscape's Infiltrator on the Atari 8bit

Review by Bob Retelle

The packaging for "Infiltrator", from Mindscape, Inc., would seem to indicate the game is just another combat helicopter "flight simulator" like Super Huey and Gunship, but there's a lot more to it than that. The disk actually contains two related, but different games. First you must fly your heavily-armed helicopter behind enemy lines, then you disembark and go on foot into the enemy headquarters on a covert intelligence mission.

The manual for the game is written as an overdone parody of military manuals and spy movies. After some silly stuff about getting you to abandon your current career as "neurosurgeon, politician, movie actor, rock star, world class motorcyclist, explorer, karate expert, and devil-may-care all around nice guy," the manual moves on into (almost) specific details about how to play the game. You're presented with the Owner's Flight Manual for your new "Whizbang Enterprises 'Gizmo'(tm) DHX-1 Attack Helicopter" (affectionately known as the "Snuffmaster"). Once you get through that, you find the McGibbits Guide to Ground Installation Infiltration, (Pocket Edition) which goes into how to play the second part of the game.

This cutesy-parody style is laid on too heavily for my taste, but the actual game instructions are clear enough if you can get through the other stuff. Thankfully, the manual doesn't detract from the game itself.

The game starts with Captain Johnny "Jimbo Baby" McGibbits (that's you) sitting in the cockpit of the "Gizmo" helicopter. The graphics are well done, with the typical helicopter instrumentation on the control panels, and lots of flashing indicator lights.

Also nicely done are the graphics of the pilot's hands on the control sticks. When you move the joystick, the hands move the control sticks in the corresponding directions. Pressing the fire button, makes the thumb on the right hand reach up and press the button on top of the right stick.

After you start your engines and get into the air, you switch to your "Tactical" display to find out the Automatic Direction Finder frequency for your mission. As it turns out, this frequency is the same every time you play the game. Then you switch to your "Communications" display and enter the frequency manually into the ADF. From that point on, the ADF indicator on the instrument panel will point you in the direction of your target location.

While flying to your destination, you'll encounter other air craft, some friendly, some enemy and some maniacs who will attack *anyone*. You have to switch to your communications system and type in a request for identification. The other aircraft will reply with the pilot's code name and requests you identify yourself. This is where some "skill" is required to guess whether the other pilot's name sounds like a "friendly or an "enemy". If you guess right, and your reply is accepted, you'll be allowed to proceed without having to fight. You have to constantly watch for other aircraft, because if they challenge you first, you won't have a clue as to their loyalties, and will just have to flip a coin as to how to answer them.

The chopper's controls, often a subject for criticism with me, are very nicely done! The fire button is used as a sort of "Shift Key" to allow the joystick to control all of the helicopter's movement. You can go up and down, accelerate and decelerate, and both bank and rotate to the left and right, all without taking your hands off the stick. The problem occurs when you have a weapon armed, and you have to disarm it before you can slow down or rotate using the fire button, but I prefer this control setup over ones which require keyboard action for flying.

I missed having a Radar display of the positions of enemy aircraft, but there is an indicator which flashes when an enemy launches a missile at you, allowing you to quickly fire off the appropriate counter-measure. There really wasn't much action during the flight portion of the first mission. I'm assuming things will get hotter during later missions, IF I can ever survive the second part.

Once you land your chopper behind enemy lines, you're asked to flip the disk, and the ground infiltration portion of the game loads. The game play here is reminiscent of a one-player Spy vs. Spy and Castle Wolfenstein.

In the first mission, you have to sneak by the guards and photograph secret documents and aircraft, then return to your helicopter to fly home. To aid you in this operation, you have fake ID papers, a mine detector and two different types of sleeping gas. As this is a "covert" operation, you don't have weapons to defend yourself.

I found it extremely difficult to get past all the guards with-

out them setting off the Alarm which causes *everyone* in the installation to go after you.

Even if a guard in a room accepts your papers as legitimate, you still have to search the file cabinets in the room. If he sees you doing this, he'll set off the alarm. If you take too long getting your sleeping gas ready after a guard says your papers are not in order and try to run, he'll set off the alarm. Once that happens, it's pretty much all over. There *is* a security pass silencing the alarm somewhere in the installation, but I've yet to find it, and it only works once. You have a limited supply of the sleeping gas, and while you can find more by searching, it'll be long gone before you get out alive. After being caught five times, the mission is scrubbed, and you'll have to start over from the beginning, back in your helicopter.

The game requires an XL or XE system to run. I did try it on my 48K 800, but it does require the full 64K that the package indicates.

Infiltrator is a good blend of two different types of games. The helicopter simulation seems to be a little less complex than others, but still is very well done. The ground infiltration portion has a high frustration factor, but it looks as though perserverance and patience may be the key to slipping past the guards. I'd recommend "Infiltrator" to anyone who enjoys both flight simulators and "spy" games.

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Out Run by US Gold

Review by Michael Bonkowski (MACE)

I have always hated reading reviews. I felt the person writing the review doesn't understand what I am looking for in a program. They tell me the program is "the best thing that ever existed" only to spend my money to find out it's a dust collector.

Well, now it's my turn. I have owned my Mega ST2 for 6 months now and so far Out Run is one of my favorites. Most, if not all, of you will recall an arcade game by the same name. Well, this is not just a quick copy.

According to the box, it took nine months to program just the graphic design and gameplay and it shows. In the game, you are driving a Ferrari Testarossa Convertible in a race. While the car's graphic appearance is not as fancy as Test Drive from Accolade, the graphics are very good. Even if you crash the car, which you will do often enough, the car will roll over, showing the undercarriage,(including the suspension and exhaust pipes!). The display updates quickly and smoothly.

The selection of the program's options are GEM-based. You can choose to turn the music on and off (for a reason I will get to in a minute), start game, have a lot or little traffic, show a demo of the game or choose between mouse and joystick operations. They even changed the black mouse pointer into a steering wheel. Here is where a minor nuisance arrises. The docs don't state that once you select joystick, the mouse becomes inactive. After about three reboots, I bumped the joystick, and noticed it moved the pointer.

The music was a surprise. The game itself has the standard music any game would come with. But I was surprised when, included in the box, was a audio cassette containing the original soundtrack taken right from the arcade game itself, the rushing wind, crashing waves and backround music. Only problem with this idea is finding a cassette player or stereo close by.

One nice feature is a pause function. If you hit the space bar, you are presented with the start-up menu. When you want to resume the game, drop the menu and select continue. You also control your car's direction. You can choose one of two different exits to the enter the next stage. If you tire of one way, take the other exit. You must go through five stages in the allotted time or the game ends, but have a total of fifteen different routes to take.

US Gold also has other titles like Gauntlet, Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom and Road Runner for the ST. If this is the quality of software that they are producing, I am going to be purchasing more of their software!

US Gold Ltd. Units 2/3 Holford Way Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX Tel. 021 356 3388.

Taking it to the Streets

Test Drive and Crazy Cars for the ST

Review by Bill Rayl

I don't know about you, but after some grueling hours of word processing or databasing with the ST, I like to get away from it all. What could be better than a nice little drive? How about a nice drive in a Porsche 911 or maybe a Lamborghini Countach?

Test Drive

Test Drive from Accolade is a driving simulation giving you a taste of what it's like to slip behind the wheel of a Porsche 911 Turbo, Chevy Corvette, Ferrari Testarossa, Lamborghini Countach or Lotus Esprit turbo. Each car is stunningly depicted with its performance specifications -- such as type of engine and transmission, acceleration speeds and top speed and even the tires on the car. Once you've chosen the car, it's time to hit the road.

From here on it, you're behind the wheel, using a joystick, port 2, to shift, steer and change speed. Again the graphic representation of the dashboard is very detailed, and you can optionally display the shifter stick in the lower right corner of the screen. While cruising down (and up) the winding mountainous road, you'll find water slicks, pot holes and a few "Sunday drivers" to really slow you down.

When you pass, look out for oncoming semi-trucks! And, there's always the police just waiting for you to pass through their radar traps. Keep one eye on your Radar Detector! The faster you get to the gas station at the top of "The Rock" and the less mishaps you have, the higher your score.

As a simulation, Test Drive passes and surpasses. The graphics are very good, animation is quite smooth and the joystick control of the cars is surprisingly well done. The sound effects are less than realistic, but they aren't too bad.

Overall, Test Drive is a winner as a driving simulation, but it's probably not a game you'll turn to for hours of escape once the "newness" wears off.

Crazy Cars

Crazy Cars is Test Drive taken one step farther. Let me first say that comparing Test Drive (a simulation game) to Crazy Cars, an arcade-style game in the Pole Position tradition, would be unfair to both games.

Crazy Cars comes to us from Titus Software. Based in France, Titus is testing the US waters with a number of excellent games. Crazy Cars is their first foray into the ST market, and it's a good one. The scenario is simple -- you start "The American Cross-country Prestige Cars Race" with a Mercedes 560 SEC. The three-part race takes you to Arizona, Florida and the Space Shuttle. If you finish the race by the allotted time, you get a faster car -- first a Porsche 911 Turbo, then a Lamborghini Countach and finally, if you're really good, a Ferrari GTO.

The game does not graphically put you behind wheel, as does Test Drive. Instead, you "follow" your car down the road, similar to the perspective in Pole Position, Great American Road Race and other race classics. Either the keyboard or joystick can be used to control your car's acceleration, braking and turning. Both function well in this respect, so choosing which is best is a matter of personal preference. The scrolling of the countryside and other cars as you go zooming by, is superb and the sound effects are first rate.

Crazy Cars has a couple little surprises that add to the game as well. The digitized music blasting from your radio as you first boot the game is a bit startling the first time, but pleasantly so. Even more startling is the first time you hit a bump in the road and leave the ground while cruising at over 100 mph! You can use this feature of the game to actually fly over vehicles -- they don't teach you to pass like that in Driver's Training!

Both games are copy-protected, and a color monitor or emulator is required.

Test Drive, (2 disks) $49.95
Accolade, 20813 Stevens Creek, Cupertino, CA 95014 (408) 446-5757

Crazy Cars (1 disk) $39.95
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Epyx's DeathSword for the ST

Review By Bill Boles (MACE)

Are there many of you who wish to play a game that lets you do more than blow up ships, fry aliens or search for treasure? Do you crave a *really* violent game? If so, Epyx has just released Deathsword.

In Deathsword, one of Epyx's Maxx Out series, you are Gorth, son of the king of the Northlands, whose task is to rescue the princess Mariana from the clutches of the evil wizard Drax.

As the game begins, you find yourself in a forest confronted by the first of Drax's warriors. Using the joystick, you jump and roll to protect your body and whirl your sword or deliver neck and leg chops, head butts, body chops or flying neck chops. At the top of the screen are two rows of red dots which show how many hits you or your opponent can take. Each of these dots represent two hits each. When you run out of hits, you die.

The first guard you come up against is no problem. However, the guards get better with each one you face, i.e. they learn to better anticipate your moves. If you win all the battles, you then move to Drax's throne room where the wizard watches your next battle. Getting past these contests will send you to the final showdown with the wizard himself. In this one, Drax hurls energy globes at you which will kill you with one hit.

What makes Deathsword so violent is the neck chop manouver mentioned earlier. When this move is timed right, your opponent's head is chopped off and falls to the ground. The body spurts blood from the neck, and a green Orc creature kicks the head away (making a realistic squish) before carting away the carcass.

Other touches to the program include digitized sounds which range from yells of pain as a character takes a hit to the sound of swords clashing against one another.

In all, this is an entertaining game. Though some people may not want children playing it, it does provide a lot of fun. So, if you want a game that's loads of fun (and a little sick) pick up a copy of Deathsword and go head hunting.

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Pinball Wizard
the ST Pinball Game

Review by Bill and Pattie Rayl

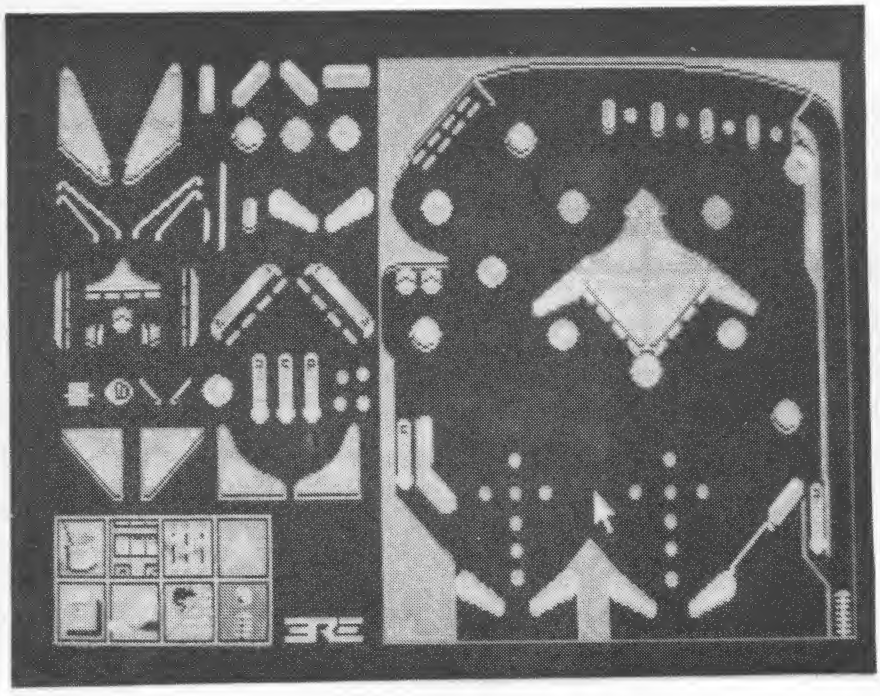
Do you like playing pinball? Have you ever gone into an arcade and thought, "Gee, I could design a better game than this," or "Wouldn't it be nice if I had something like this at home?"

If so, Accolade has the game for you! Pinball Wizard is an excellent pinball game and pinball game construction program. The game is easy to play, and it's a breeze to make your own games.

Pinball Wizard comes with several example games that show what can be created using the supplied bumpers, spinners and other game pieces.

Accolade has also provided a basic drawing program to turn your games into works of art. Unfortunately, you can't put a supplied piece on a decorated area, but you can decorate the supplied pieces. The drawing process has two modes -- Obstacles and Decoration. If you're not satisfied with a Pinball Wizard piece, you can create your own.

Then, set up your game with the right number of balls (one to five per player) and with just the right amount of elasticity, speed, tilt and stroboscope effects. Finally, designate the point values for the bumpers and other pieces and give special "bonuses" for hitting combinations of pieces. (Of course, you can always use the default setting for all of these!) Now, let's play!



The game may be played using the mouse or keyboard. The keyboard uses the Alternate and Caps Lock keys while the mouse uses the right and left buttons. The mouse can be hard to play with, and we usually use the keyboard.

Drop some coins into the slot, press the player button and get set! Pinball Wizard will play a rousing fanfare each time you press the player selection button. As you play, you hear the familiar arcade sound of buzzers and bells. Each time the program totals up your score, you get serenaded with peppy music. Although the program doesn't have any flashing lights, the feel of a real pinball game is there.

Pinball Wizard is an excellent game, and we have had a lot of fun designing and playing games of our own. We recommend Pinball Wizard to anyone who enjoys playing pinball games. Accolade even claims the games are so realisitic you'll find yourself dropping quarters into your disk drive!

Pinball Wizard plays on any ST with a color monitor and is copy-protected. Accolade, 20833 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino, CA 95014.

Shadow for the ST

Review by Byron Johnson

Shadow is a multi-tasking telecommunications program that works with GEM window telecommunications programs like Flash! or as a stand-alone VT-52 terminal package. Shadow downloads files in the background while running most any other program in the foreground. It does this with a protected area of RAM, called a file transfer buffer and feeding the download directly into it. This frees up the microprocessor for the other program.

When it comes time to download a file, you have the option of using Shadow's buffer or Flash's normal method. If you choose Shadow, you may exit Flash as soon as the download begins and run most any other program. A box appears in the upper right corner of the screen showing the number of blocks currently downloaded. You may do a warm reset, change screen resolutions from medium res to high res (if you have another monitor), print ASCII files from the desktop or anything else short of turning off the power.

Shadow will continue until the download is complete. Next, you must remember to save the file to disk or it will be lost when you power down. The only real disadvantage I can see is the loss of 100K or more of valuable memory for Shadow's buffer. This is how Shadow.PRG works.

The second option is Shadow.ACC -- a desktop accessory and a VT-52 terminal emulator. This is ok, if you don't own a full-featured program like Flash, or if you just want to download a large file from a friend and don't want to tie up your computer while doing it.

Shadow seems to be most useful while on a pay service like Delphi, CompuServe or GEnie. While a download is in progress, I can scan through the capture buffer to see what I want to download next or print out file descriptions. You could save a lot of money by being more organized and keeping connect times to a minimum. This alone could pay for Shadow in a short time.

Shadow will work with the following protocols: X-modem/CRC, Y-modem/X-modem 1k, Y-modem Batch, CompuServe B protocol and ASCII. It has a built-in dial directory and can operate from 300 to 19,200 baud. The authors added 27 new dialog boxes to keep you informed of what you did wrong.

Installation is easy, just copy Shadow.PRG into your auto folder and either install a ram disk or a Shadow.INF file, reboot the computer and run Flash like always. I've found configuring the file transfer buffer to about 100k seems to work pretty well. Or you could copy Shadow.ACC onto your boot drive and you're ready to go.

Shadow comes on a single-sided disk and is not copy protected. Also on the disk are the Flash conversion files to update you from V1.51 to V1.52 and from V1.52 to V1.60. The 62-page manual is very informative and makes using this program a real pleasure.

In fact, the only criticism I can come up with is I wish the status box actually read the number of blocks to go. Then I could estimate the time remaining before the end of the download. If you're using a 520ST, I would recommend turning off all other accessories and using a small file transfer buffer, perhaps 50K to 75K.

Shadow was written by Paul Lee and Michael Vederman of Double Click Software and marketed by Antic Publishing. It sells for $26.00 dollars and is available locally.

If you're really into telecommunications, I would recommend Shadow. An update, called Shadow V1.01 was recently released. It fixes minor bugs and is available on pay services and bulletin boards.

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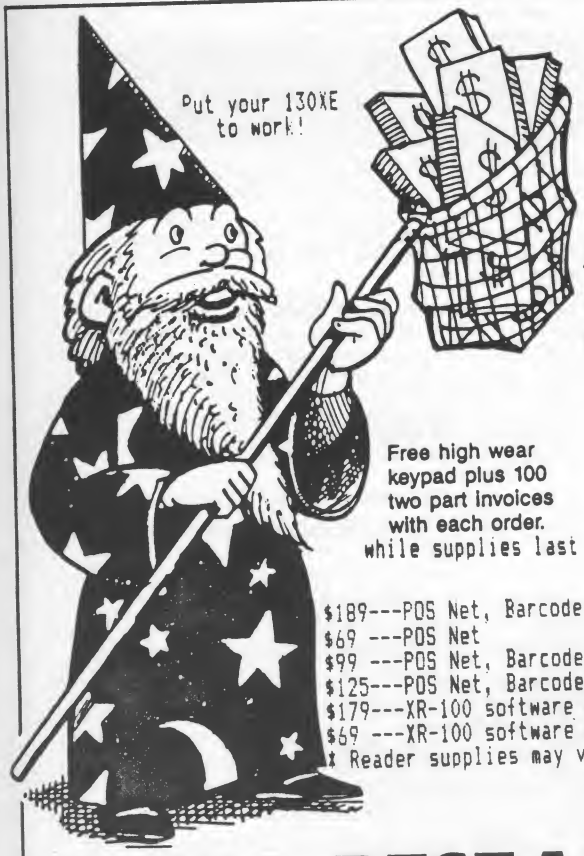

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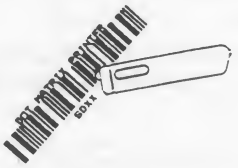

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Don Davis's Atari View 8

8bit software review by John Nagy (CHAOS)

The recent talk about GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) inter-computer picture files has included references why the Atari 8bit should be left out -- too little memory and not enough resolution, you understand.

Well, CAN'T hasn't been a popular word with our public domain programmers. Don Davis has produced a competent shareware viewer for the 8bits. It features zoom and color control (required if you want to see much). Not every GIF file will look good using Atari View 8, and others will look much better veiwed in parts rather than in the whole. Control of the aspect ratios and the ability to re-save a portion of the GIF picture into Koala-type format is included.

The program is not fast, and some pictures will look awful because of too much detail or color. Still,Don Davis is working on it, and intends to put out a GIF encoder for the 8bit (since this is only a veiwer), a GIF-to-printer utility and other related programs and utilities.

Our congratulations to Don for completing a seemingly impossible task. As it is shareware, if you find it useful or fun, please send Don Davis a contribution for his efforts. You can contact him at 50 West Holly Hill Road, Apt. 13, Thomasville, North Carolina 27360.

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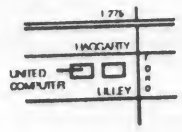

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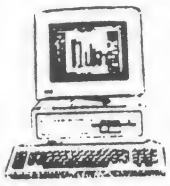

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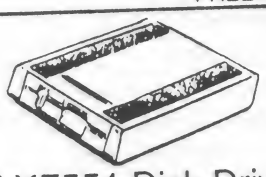

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Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the World of Atari ST computers

Submitted on behalf of M.A.C.E.

The Logical Move...

Soft Logic, creators of "Publishing Partner" have started shipping their newest product, " ***Publishing Partner Professional.***"

For those of you who have waited patiently for **Soft Logic** to release this promised program (long long ago promised), the wait for a quality program may not yet be over.

Soft Logic started shipping their much vaunted and well advertized program to it's registered owners in the latter part of July. With the confidence built by the excellence of their previous program, *Publishing Partner*, most users felt it was a safe bet to invest their money with this company - *in advance* - to be the first on the block to get copies of the professional, as soon as it was available.

I regret to advise that the current version of the product shipping in July - August is a far cry from the product we all expected. So badly bug ridden is the program, and so incomplete, that I cannot for the life of me understand why this fine company released it. Perhaps they finally succumbed to what must have been ever increasing pressure from their registered owners to get their software. One can only hope that this decision does not turn into a tragic error for Soft Logic.

But it simply does not work...

Publishing Parner Professional, when booting up does reflect some very significant changes from it's predecessor. The main screen has a crisp clean and uncluttered look to it, while still retaining the feel of the previous version. Many of the features promised by the developers in their advertisments are visually there, but alas they do not work.

Getting the program to crash is quite simple. If any of you are into desktop publishing, you will know how frustrating an experience this can be, especially when you have just lost several hours work due to program lockup.

The Main screen promises many enhancements that writers and business people have been clamoring for. Things like Text rotation, expanded picture importation, Text flow around graphics, Greeking and automatic conversion or importing of old files created with the original "Publishing Partner". *None* of these features work! Things like changing already typed text from one font to another - cannot be done, and so on and so on.

For the life of me, I cannot understand the decision to release the program. Soft Logic is and has been a fine example of a company dedicated to releasing only the very best software for the ST. Their original program was no doubt the reason many people bought their first ST's. I remain convinced that this software will be the answer to all of our wish lists when it properly comes to market, regardless of price. For this reason, I urge Soft Logic to rethink it's decision to release this flawed code, at this time. People who want quality software will wait for a good product. Yes, the pressure on you must be incredible, but you must resist the temptation to ship a version that does not do what it it promises. No one in their right mind would seriously consider using the current version so why ship it? One can only hope that the lashback from this release will not water down the computing public's clamour for the product we know it will be.

Come on **Soft Logic** , tell us it was shipped in error, and give us a new target date for the real thing. We will hate to, but we can wait. We have that much confidence in your abilities to ship a world class product for the Atari ST, a truly World Class computer.

Atari establishes Dealers

Atari recently held it's first dealer council meeting , and pledged it's commitment to the Dealer concept. The company estabished two types of Dealers for it's product lines.

The first type of dealer is a business center. They handle the complete Atari product line from PC's to Lasers and earn gross margins of up to 35 percent.

The second dealer is a computer specialty shop. Their mandate is to address the needs of the home computer user, small businesses, and professionals. Their margins on sales would normally would run at about 30 percent.

Atari is currently looking to expand it's base of 400 dealers, but with the *higher end* dealer that will penetrate the U.S. business market.

To support the thrust, Atari has hired field salespersons and telemarketers who will provide referrals to the dealers. Atari has also established a co-op advertising program and plans to provide it's dealers with periodic incentives to help position products in different vertical markets such as Desktop Publishing.

The next scheduled dealers council meeting is set for September, when dealers will be able to report on their successes to date, and presumably expand the thrust into the targetted markets they serve.

Atari still suffers from too little shelf exposure on specialty computer stores across the country. In areas like the American Midwest, where dealer support is light, they do little if any advertising, and the Atari name in not a common word to the computer buyer. Atari continues to market their product in those areas where they have good dealer coverage, and broad markets. Perhaps this coverage will come to this area in the near future.

It is encouraging to hear that Atari is still agressive in the computer business and working on newer designs and marketing concepts. It's about time for a round of new product announcements, so look for some interesting News from **Atari** in the very near future.

Allen P. Bargen

Debits 'n Credits -- STAccounts

Integrated GEM-based Accounting from ISD

Review by Gordon Totty

Welcome to the stuffy, stiff, stilted world of the accountant. Most folks like to think the preceding adjectives aptly describe accounting, accountants, and their accouterments.

Most folks are wrong about most anything, most of the time. (Well...at least some of the time, unless P.T. Barnum was wrong about his birthrate statistic.) For example, meet the HELP icon, a little teddy bear, from ST Accounts. The first help screen is introduced as follows:

"Hi, I'm the Chipsoft Teddy. I'm here to help you with any screens you don't quite understand. If you need help, just point the mouse onto my tummy and click the left mouse button..."

This cuddly-looking little critter sits in the lower left corner of nearly every screen in the program waiting for you to poke him in the tummy. If this program had sound, you would probably hear him giggle with each probing inquiry for more information.

Teddy bears for accountants! For sure, some won't like it. Certainly, some will say it diminishes the professional appearance of the package. Perhaps some will even call for their throw up pot. But others will like it, because some of the most "off the wall" comics I have personally known are or once were accountants. Bob Newhart, though not exactly a "wild and crazy guy," is a good comedian who was an accountant. (No, Bob is not one of the accountants I knew.) Perhaps slaving over the books drives some of the accountants a little dotty. This software is intended to make life a little easier for the accountant breed or any others who struggle over "the books." If it succeeds, maybe there won't ever be another Bob Newhart.

There seems to be enough work for accountants to do with computers without any of them having to turn into comedians. Arthur Anderson & Co., the big Chicago accounting firm, recently reported they expect revenue from computer consulting to exceed one billion dollars this year, which would make computer consulting about equal to 40 percent of their total revenue. One billion dollars, and Arthur Anderson & Co. is only one company in the field!

Knowing how this business was booming, in their wisdom, your editorial staff provided me a copy of ISD's STAccounts, an integrated accounting package utilizing GEM, to look over and then write this review. All this work and planning just to keep you current, up-to-date and away from a career in comedy!

For openers, the opening screen reveals that STAccounts is an international effort. It comes from Chipsoft Software and is version 2.0, copyright by Silicon Chip, Ltd., 1985. It is distributed by ISD Marketing, Inc., our good neighbors (eh?) from Markham, Ontario, who brought us VIP Professional, the Lotus 1-2-3 look alike. The program was written by Nilesh Parikh, Iain Lawrie and Keith Fraser. The title screen also credits Sophie Prince for the Teddy. Way to go, Sophie!

This review was a very difficult task for me. STAccounts is not, in my opinion, easy to learn or particularly "user friendly." And I have a head start on most of you, having taken a college degree in accounting long, long ago, with about 36 credit hours of the subject once mashed into my head. I have forgotten a lot, not to mention the unmashed lumps, and maybe I have forgotten too much to cope with a product like this without a more serious effort than I expended. So, call me potato head!

However, wrong though I may (or may not) be, I think that if you have no idea of what simple bookkeeping is about, you will find this product difficult in spite of the very good effort made to make the double entry system partly automatic.

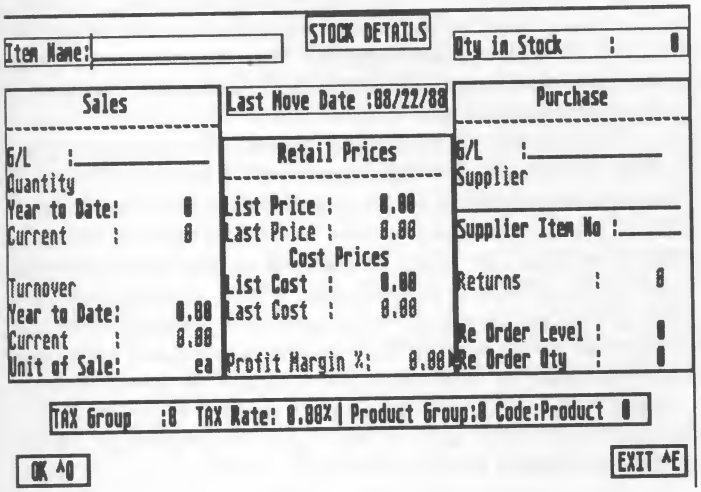
On the other hand, if you are well-aware of bookkeeping or accounting methods and have been slaving over the books manually (whilst developing a sense of humor...."whilst" is a British word I just threw in here in honor of the source of STAccounts), then you may be thrilled to see this product available for the ST. It is also available for the IBM PC and compatibles under GEM. If you are patient enough to study the manual and work carefully, Accounts is a powerful package and I am happy to see software like this being brought out for the ST line.

For those of you already heading for the door to go buy this, according to the November 1, 1987 press release I was provided with, version 1.0 (STAccounts) has a suggested retail US price of $69.95. Version 2.0 (Accounts) lists for $149.95, and the IBM version is listed at $299.95. Sorry, but I cannot tell you the difference between the two ST versions.

The program needs a minimum of 512K to operate, and the manual cautions one to ensure that 512K is available by not having any desk accessories loaded. I ran it on a 1040ST, and had no interference from my Deskcart! accessories, which I did load. I ran two small companies, as sample data to try the program out with, and the two of them "filled" my data disk. By filled, I mean I could not open another company on the same disk, not that I could not enter more data for the existing companies, as STAccounts can record 2,005 transactions on a 354K disk.

Whilst (oops) we are on statistics, let me tell you the program comes on one disk (the manual mentioned two, but the single disk did not seem to be missing anything) that includes 38 files for a total of 582,903 bytes. There is the main program, an associated data file, a reports program with its data file, an ASCII printer driver with documentation, an Epson FX80 printer driver and documentation, a help file, a program to create your own printer driver, and formats for 28 reports that you can create with this program. Is that a lot? I think so.

The program is not copy protected; you are licensed to use it and to make a back-up copy. You are trusted to not give it away to your friends, a practice I have heard is common in the IBM, Apple, and Commodore worlds.



The manual that came with STAccounts is titled "Accounts", which is the IBM version of the product. According to an inserted sheet, both versions are functionally the same, which points up the fact that the ST version, at $100 below the IBM version, is a relative bargain. The manual is 148 pages long, and wire ring bound to lay flat when open.

So, what do you do with this product? You can keep the books for a small or medium-sized business. You can tailor the accounts for any kind of business you are in, although out of the box it is partially set up for a merchandising operation (as opposed to manufacturing). You can set it up to write your checks and prepare statements or billings. You can enter orders and track your inventory in ten product groups. It will automatically age your receivables and payables into current, and 30, 60, and 90 or more day old categories.

There's more. You can input control data, such as budget numbers and credit limits. You can record the names, phone numbers, mailing addresses, and shipping addresses of all of your receivables and payables. You can screw the books up and then hand your auditor an "audit trail" listing every transaction that you entered. You could even give him a cross-referenced audit trail of the general ledger accounts, but why not let him work for his money?! (Someday, I'm going to make an interrobang for use in my word processor!?) Just think, if you do screw up the books you can do like some of the folks I know and blame it all on the damn computer!

And some more. You can design your own reports if the 28 formats provided with the program just don't do it for you. I was tempted to try this, as the balance sheet that the program prints leaves a lot of empty space (skipped lines) that caused my simple one-page example to overflow to a second page. However, I did not have time for this.

There's some more, and more, too. More than this friendly scribe could find time to play with. Having said, "play with" I should reiterate that this is not an easy program to use right out of the box. A lot of patient work and study is necessary to use STAccounts.

When you are first loading your initial data, you must be very careful and plan ahead. This is one product where, in my opinion, you must read the manual carefully before you begin if you are using it "for real" and have a lot riding on the outcome.

Many, in fact, will be best served by just buying it and handing it to the bookkeeper or accountant with an exhortation to increase his/her productivity. (Trust me, the hired help just loves to get that little zinger from the boss!) Even in this case, be prepared for the bookkeeper to lose a bit of time in figuring this out and working carefully.

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Now, may I pick some nits? Oh boy, nit-picking is the avocation of accountants, and I learned it well. It is far, far more enjoyable when one accountant can pick nits off another accountant. No, it's not quite like two monkeys in the zoo, but is more like a master swordsman meeting another, with blade bared and thirsty for a taste of blood! "En garde, dolt, I will carve thee like a tender roast!" Oops, got carried away there. On second thought it is like two monkeys in the zoo .... I eat all the nits I pick.

Nit #1: I think the program puts too much emphasis on sales tax and discount rates; you can pre-set ten of each. On the other hand, you do not have to use every feature that is made available.

Nit #2: You are encouraged to create a data disk with sample data and work through each section of the system. It would be nice if a tutorial could have been provided with the main program. Two tutorials are provided with the reports program.

Nit #3: "General Ledger STAccounts are named after a source of Profit or Loss to the company" according to the manual. I know that they were trying to simplify things for the non-accountant, but I find this statement to be inaccurate and potentially more misleading to the uninitiated than just quoting a standard accounting text might be.

Nit #4: Another quote: "Debit all losses in the Loss Account, because that account has received the benefit of expenditure by your company. Credit all revenue to the Profit Account because that account has given some benefit in cash to your company." The manual then continues: "If you have any doubts at all about the structure and use of the General Ledger, consult your accountant." Now, by all means consult an accountant if you need help with the books for your business. If you show him the above quote, however, expect him to look at you a little "funny" and say, "Huh?" Worse yet, he might over-react to the quote and counsel you not to buy the software. This would be too bad, because you can get a lot of good out of this program if you can ignore the nits.

Nit #5: By menu, you are provided a choice of five types of General Ledger STAccounts. These are Sales, Purchases, Expense, Asset or Liability. This is over-simplified. Suppose you have money in the bank earning interest for the business. Which type of General Ledger Account would you use for recording interest income? If you do not know, take it from me, interest income fits none of the five categories. I imagine, and I hope, that you can work around this although I did not take the time to try. (There are limits on my willingness to expend energy in the interest of seeking truth and light.) Similarly, the capital accounts are not provided for in this partitioning of the General Ledger into five parts (More than Gaul; what gall!), but they can be accommodated as "Liabilities."

Nit #6: Initialization of a new data file is slow. Be patient. Initialization of a new data file at month end is slower. Be extra patient. It took about ten minutes for the program and disk drive to get it over with. But, what the heck is ten minutes in a month? A coffee break, which you can plan for during initialization.

Last nit, a nice one: I liked the use of color. I would have liked it just as well even if they had used "colour." This is because I am a "color junkie," like most of you, I suspect, and this program used a nice raspberry color here and there. Raspberry is my favorite flavor, and until I figured it out, I was wondering why the program was provoking cravings for sherbet (I hate sorbet; don't you?) and sundaes.

I think if I do a short summary we can consider this review dealt with summarily, so on with it. I confess that after a couple of hours of initial frustration I wanted to not like this product. It seemed harder than it needed to be for me to get around. I think, in fairness, I was trying to go too fast; I urge any user not to hurry through the instructions in a rush to point and click. There are some nits, to be sure, and I may not have picked them all. This is, however, a very powerful accounting program. Used right, by somebody with the need and skill, it is well worth the relatively modest price for this type of software.

It will be interesting to see how this product fares in the small business, professional market. I wish the best for all associated with bringing another "higher class" product to the ST market.

Easy Hacking 1050 Drive Select Switch

by Don Neff

Preface

When I began writing this hardware hacker's column, I thought it would be of interest to only the most experienced hackers. To my surprise, I find that there is a large number of beginners who are interested in hardware hacking but don't know how to start. Unfortunately, some of you started with my projects and found them to be too hard. Therefore, this month we'll address the needs of the beginning hackers. The following project is an easy one that can't hurt your drive if you make a mistake installing it.

The Project

We'll be installing a switch on the front of your disk drive to allow you to assign it as Drive 1, 2 or 3. To change the drive number on a standard Atari 1050, you must turn the drive around and move the two hidden slide switches with a pen or screwdriver. Since I never seem to remember the proper positions of these switches, I had to spend a lot of time looking up the information in one of my books first.

This meant that I, like most of you, never changed my drive numbers once they were set, and always booted off of the same drive. After a while that boot drive became noisey and finally wore out while my other drives received little use at all. The solution was to install an easily accessible switch on each drive and boot off of a different one each time I used the computer.

The Things You Need

Everything you'll need is available from Radio Shack. When I mention each item for the first time, I'll include the Radio Shack part number in parentheses after the name of the item. Radio Shack stores display their parts in numerical order so you can locate what you need by the part number instead of the part name. Their sales people can help you locate anything you can't find by yourself but, they can't help you a bit with your electronic questions. (People who understand electronics don't have to work for Radio Shack wages.)

First you'll need a low-power soldering pencil (64-2070), a stand (64-2078) to keep it off your work table, and some thin solder (64-005). Use stranded (not solid), soft copper wire (278-1307) of 22-24 gage for hookup wire (avoid any wire the phone company uses). Long-nose pliers (64-1843) and diagonal cutters (64-1841) are required for almost every project. If you find you can't strip wire with the diagonal cutters without amputating the end of the wire, you should also get an adjustable wire stripper (64-1952).

The resistor color code is easy to remember if you know the story about Violet and the Bad Boys; however, this is a family magazine so I had better not tell you about it here. Instead, you can pick up a pocket guide (271-1210) which tells you the value of a resistor when you dial in the colors.

This project requires only one part -- a Single Pole Double Throw (SPDT), Center Off, Toggle Switch (275-325). You'll need one of these three position switches for each of your drives.

Getting started

Clean off an area on your work bench or table to give a comfortable amount of room to work in. Wet the sponge in your soldering iron stand, set the soldering pencil in the wire coil and plug the power cord in to warm it up. We'll disassemble the drive while the pencil warms up.

Opening the Drive

Disconnect all the cables from your drive and set it upside down on the work bench. Unscrew the six phillips head screws which hold the case together. You'll be able to remove only the two which hold the front panel in place, the other four sit in deep holes. Hold the case together with both hands and turn the drive right side up again, allowing the four remaining screws to fall out. Set the drive on the bench and lift up the back of the top half of the case. The top half of the case will pivot at the front until the front panel snaps out. Set the top of the case and the front panel out of the way for now.

The drive mechanism sits on four posts above the circuit board and is not fastened to anything. The wires connecting the mechanism to the circuit board are fragile and can not with-

stand any pulling so we will not attempt to remove them. The circuit board is held in place by two plastic tabs, one on each side of the drive mechanism. Gently lift up on the front of the circuit board (not the drive mechanism) as you hold each of the tabs back with a screw driver. Hold the circuit board and the drive mechanism together and lift them out of the case, front first. Four plastic washers on the mounting post may loosen and fall out as you do this , but no harm will occur. Turn the board and drive mechanism up side down on the bench so you can work on the bottom of the board. Set the bottom of the case out of the way.

Preparing the Soldering Pencil

Touch a piece of solder to the end of the soldering pencil to see if it's warm enough to use -- if the solder melts, it's ready. Wipe the tip of the pencil on the sponge to clean it off, and then coat the tip with solder. Wipe the extra solder off of the tip with the sponge. Apply more solder to the tip and try to get a coat of solder all over the tip. Once again clean the extra solder off with the sponge. The tip should now have an even, shiny coat of molten solder on it. This is the way it should always look when you are using it. If the tip gets dirty or the solder coating gets dull, you must clean the tip with the sponge again.

Installing the Switch

Figure 1 shows the area of the bottom of circuit board we will be working with. It is located at the rear of the board. in the corner with the black and white drive select switches. Cut three 15-inch lengths of wire, each a different color, and strip 3/8 of an inch of insulation from all the ends. Apply a little solder to the bare ends of the wires (this is called "tinning" the wire) by holding the tip of the soldering pencil, the end of a wire and the end of the solder together (you do have three hands, don't you?) until the wire is hot enough to melt the solder. Tinning is easier to do if you have a small vise (64-2094 or 64-2093) to hold the wire.

Solder one end of each wire to a pin on the new SPDT switch. Do not apply too much solder (if your solder joints are little round balls, you used too much). If a wire moves before the solder cools, you must resolder that joint. Use the diagonal cutters to trim off the excess wire close to the pins so there are no shorts between the pins. The free end of the wire which is soldered to the center pin of the SPDT switch must be soldered to the connection point labeled A in Figure 1. The other two wires may be soldered to the points labeled B and C in Figure 1. It does not matter which of these two wires goes to either point as long as there is one wire on each point. Only the wire from the center pin of the switch is critical, and must go only to point A. Check all your solder joints to make sure they are shiny and smooth. If any of them are dull or wrinkled, do them over. If any of your joints are round balls, remove the excess solder with solder wick (64-2090) or a solder sucker (64-2086). Make sure there are no solder bridges between any two solder joints (use a good light and a magnifier).

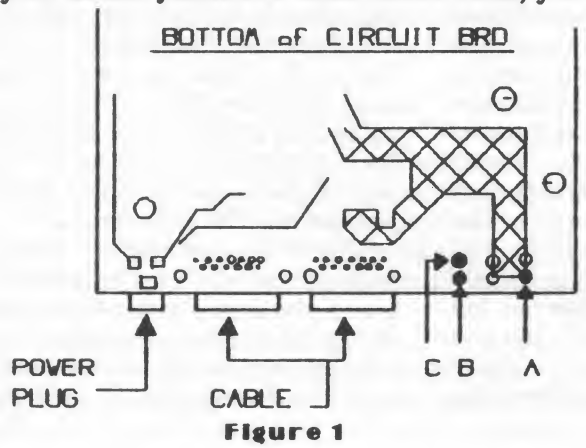

Figure 1

Hold the circuit board and drive mechanism together and insert them back into the lower half of the drive case. The new switch should be extending out the front and the drive mechanism must be resting on its four support posts again.

Set the black and white drive select switches to the position for drive 1 (both switches moved away from the cable connectors) and reconnect the drive to your computer. Turn on the drive, set the new switch to its center position, insert a DOS disk and turn on the computer. The drive should boot as normal as drive #1. Now turn the new switch to one of its two side positions and call for a directory of drive #2 from DOS.

If the directory of the same drive comes up on your screen, the switch is installed properly. If DOS times out without giving you a directory, turn the switch to the other side position and call up the #2 directory again. If you do not get a directory of this drive either time you must recheck your wiring and solder joints again. When you are successful at getting a directory of this drive as #2, leave the switch in that position and return the drive to your work bench.

Locate a spot for the switch on the front panel and drill a 1/4 inch mounting hole for it. Insert the switch through the hole and fasten it in place with the supplied nut and washers. The switch should still be in the same position it was when DOS read the directory as #2 drive. Mark this position as #2, mark the opposite position as #3, and mark the center position as #1 drive. Use a can of compressed air (64-2325) to blow the dust out of the drive mechanism and apply some oil (64- 2301) to the two metal rails which the head slides on. Snap the front panel and upper half of the case back into place and reinstall the six screws on the bottom.

Make this modification to all your drives and spread the work evenly between them from now on.

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Binary Maybe's, the IF..THEN..Who Cares Maxim

by Clinton Pierce (GAG)

In the last installment, I stressed the importance of logical thinking and thinking in general. Now, I hope to give you the tools needed to do this. First of all, walk (do not run and trip over your computer cables) to your bookshelp and pull down a math textbook. Theorems and postulates are not just made up at the whim of the publisher. They are derived from logical steps, which themselves are derived. (From What? you say.)

Let's make an assumption: the Truth is true. Ok, not bad. (For a proof, see Descartes.) Let's use the equals instead of the word "is." P=P is true. Want some more? P<>_P (P is not, not P), still true. The list of logical operators is extensive and I'm not going to derive each one of them. You should know what each of these does: AND, OR, _(NOT), XOR (Exclusive Or), =, <>, TRUE, FALSE, -> (Implies) and IFF (If and Only If).

You should note there isn't a "looks like" or "should" function. Computers understand is, was, shall be, and nothing else. They don't work well with implications, indecision, morality and justice. They do what is correct.

Let's look at other things of interest. Numbers. (And for the sake of clarity, integers.) Oh sure, you know all about them. You learned those in the first grade, did you? No. You learned 5 preceeds 6 and 2+3 is 5. You didn't learn numbers.

Every number greater than 1 is a unique product of primes. [If N is an integer, then N must be equal to some axb (where a AND b < N) If A or B are nonprime, then they each become their own N and the process starts over.] What good is all of this symbolic garbage? Take a simple problem: Find the primes from 1 to 70. Well, we cound take each number and divide it by every number lower than that -- only 2280 repetitions. If we are smart, we would only go up to halfway-1 of each number testing for divisibility (knowing every number cannot be divided by another evenly, when the second>First/2). We're down to 1061 repetitions. And if we start with 3 (because we *know* 2 is prime) and only count odds, we're down to 619. Using Euclid's Lemma, we can only check the odds up to the Square Root of the number to be checked to see if it is prime. We are now down to 135 repetitions. If we stop checking a number as soon as it is nonprime, then we only need 89 repetitions.

Knowing all of that symbolic garbage saved us 2191 repetitions. Finding primes was simple. What if you were trying to find a number in a telephone directory of 1,000,000 people? Or trying to sort that list alphabetically? Time and energy can be saved exponentially.

In the next installment, these techniques will be used for more "practical" applications.

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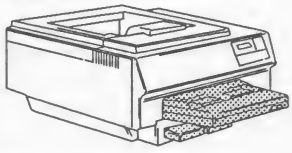

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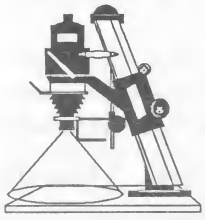

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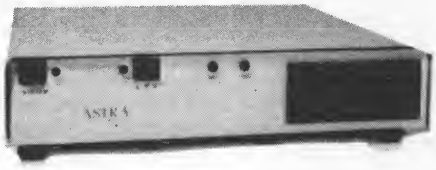

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Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

CACE

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Bret Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1 pm to approx. 4 pm.

CACE Picnic by Craig Schaff

Sleigh bells ring, are you listenin' ...Jack Frost nipping at your nose...Ah yes, the thoughts of winter... Just singin' in the rain, just singing in the rain... Ah yes, the thoughts of the picnic.

Why, oh why, in the midst of the worst drought in years, it rains on the picnic! Nix that, it downright stormed on us! But the hamburgers stayed nice and water-free! The picnic went on as planned, we had a nice turn out, a few didn't show that were expected, but then again, a few people stop by unexpectedly. All-in-all things worked out good, we had plenty of food for every one, with leftovers. Anyways, we all had a good time, if you couldn't make it this year, there is always next year..and I promise not to be in charge of the committee.

Member-at-large Report by Jimmie Boyce

Well folks, I guess that it is about time to let you know what I have been doing besides keeping the prez in line. Scott Boland is back at the helm as treasurer and I thought I should give an accounting of the financial situation with in our little group. Actually the situation has not changed much. In March of this year, we were worth $664.86; in April and May $674.46. In June it declined to $614.94, and so for the month of July the figure stands at $602.59. The decline again was for the newsletter, just about the only expense the club has had for some time now. I will be wearing a new hat for August, as Librarian Ken Huhman will be on vacation when the meeting takes place. Well, I guess that kind of brings things up to date. Hope you are having a fun summer.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

Okay, this is for all of you who think Atari is dead. I have a special treat for all of you who have wanted to see some new Atari products. At the next CACE meeting, I will show a brand new Atari XF551 double-sided double-density disk drive you have been reading so much about in recent issues of Antic and Analog.

I thought people would like to know when the next meeting will be. The next meeting date is August 14 at the East Side Lounge on Horton and Ganson Streets.

This next bit is for all of you football fans out there. Since football season is beginning shortly, I figure now is a good time to let you know there are several football programs out for your Atari. If anyone is interested in these and would like to see one demoed at the meeting, let me know as I would be glad to give you my opinion of the current lot on the market. I own Touchdown Football by Electronic Arts, Computer Quarterback by Strategic Simulations, Inc., and 3 in 1 College & Pro Football by Lance Haffner Games. I also have a couple pd handicapping programs, NFL Analysis and College Analysis. Antic or Analog also put out handicapping programs for NFL games last fall, and if I remember right we have the disks in our software library.

Well, that's about it for this month, so I'll see you all at the meeting.

CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. Membership dues are $15 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 3/12/24 baud, 24 hours serving both 8 and 16bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS to:CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8 and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The ST INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting takes place on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting. Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	Guy Hurt	484-7675
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8bit Rep	Bill Johnson	675-7166
16bit Rep	Brian Goluska	332-4415
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ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

President's Corner by Leo Sell

September already...boy, did summer go fast. What a hot one too!!! Summer is usually a little slow for us, but you all seem to jump back in come fall. So, for all of you coming back and getting involved, welcome back! As I write this, I look forward to the CHAOS picnic this Saturday. I expect we'll have a good time visiting and commisserating about Atari and other things -- maybe even non-computer related.

I recently talked with Cindy Claveran, Atari's new user group representative. While she seems very competent, I remain *very* concerned about Atari's attitude toward user groups. The newest edition of Atari's User Group News includes a required "application" to be an authorized Atari Computer Enthusiast group. The most incongruous question asked for a retailer that will sponsor our user group. What a silly question. Atari has nearly killed the retail business and is working on kill-

ing the mail-order business. And they have the gall to ask us for a retailer to sponsor us. I told Cindy it would be more appropriate if they asked their retailers for user group sponsorship! There was also an article beating the "user groups need to support Atari retailers" horse. What retailers??? I told her the dealer network is very weak in this area. She asked us to provide some more detail. She expressed interest in our fall Computer Sale. Speaking of the show, plans are progressing but not final. The early details look very exciting.

Don't forget the October auction. As usual we'll sell about anything, for a cut. Details will be posted at the meeting. The auction will take place on the 3rd Saturday of October in place of the 8bit SIG meeting. See you there!!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-Profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari Personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm. During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday session for second shift workers. This meeting begins at 9:30am.

GAG President's Report by Jerry Cross

Well, it's been a long, hot summer. But it's finally over! This has been one of the longest summers I can remember! Well, now that the meetings are are starting up again, maybe things will get better. And since there is a total lack of news to discuss this month, I guess now is as good a time as any to give my "State of the Club" report. It's no news to anyone that Atari has done very little for the 8bit users. Our complaints are usually answered by the reply "Well, we did come up with an 80-column card, 1200 baud modem, and a brand new disk drive, didn't we?" Well sure, I guess so. Now if they would only ship out some software to support these products I might start believing it. But with the lack of support from both Atari and the other developers, the 8bit membership has really slacked off. This is not unique to our club, but also is a problem with every club I have contacted. I believe it's because the current 8bit owners are either burned out from using their systems, or have moved on to more powerful computers. Since the Atari ST is so hard to purchase in the US, I can only assume they moved on to IBM clones, Macintoshes and Amigas. This has further hurt our membership.

We are now at a turning point with our club. What direction should we take? A service-oriented club or a social club? If the trend for a smaller membership continues, which I'm sure it will, we will need a lot of help from the current membership. If we want to be recognized by software companies as a serious club, we have to search out new members, and offer services they can not obtain elsewhere. In other words, if we are to survive as a service-oriented club, we need help from everyone!

October is an important time for us. It is the time to elect new officers. I have been informed that several current officers do not wish to run again (including myself). This leave open the office of president, librarian, and 8bit vice president. I would like each of you to consider running for an office. The librarian's job is a lot of work, but it also generates the most income for our club. The president and vice president must search out members and keep in touch with Atari and software companies to let them know we still exist! It only takes a few hours a week, so why not give it some thought.

Remember, it's up to us to see the 8bits survive. After what I saw at CES, I don't think we have anyone else to count on, not even Atari!

One last note. In the last issue of MAM, I came down pretty hard on Atari for not attending the computer shows being held around the country. My letter was written right after the CES show (in early June) and was not published until August. In that time, Atari did agree to attend a few shows. I received a call from Cindy Claveran, the User Group Coordinator for Atari, saying Atari is interested in working with user groups in setting up their own shows. Whether Atari is serious about this is anybody's guess. That's it for this month, see you at the meeting.

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11am in the Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College Campus, corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $20/yr.

President	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
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Great Lakes Atari ST Support — 'GLASS', Michigans only! 'ST' only Users Group — I ♥ my ST!

From The Desk Of The President...August 1988

It's the 15th of August, and summer is almost over. Most vacations have been completed and people are getting ready to buckle down for fall and winter. Maybe the heat will even let up a little. If summer months are the slowest for user groups, we can expect to see rather large attendance at GLASS this fall because we never seemed to slow down. We have been experiencing 45 percent+ membership attendance all summer and even signed on nine more people.

But of course, fall brings out more new products (in preparation for Christmas?) and these will have to be reviewed, demonstrated and evaluated. Training seminars will be re-activated and new users will get some assistance in learning their systems and how to best optimize them. Home business owners -- we will assist in any way we can in choosing software best suited for your needs, and we also ask those of you who are using business software to help us help others like yourself. After all, that's what membership in GLASS is all about.

This fall we will be showing the operation of various printers (October), use and explanation of floppy drives, hard drives, ramdisks and file and disk formats (November), word processors and text editors (on-going) and

anything that you let us know you want more information about. If you are having a problem with a particular piece of software just bring in a disk(s) with the software and your related data files and we can look into it right here that night.

Our Public Domain software library has grown significantly over the summer and the Public Domain catalog is now available. The catalog is $1.00 with free updates (about every two months). Our collections for public domain and shareware software has been well received by the authors and programmers. We are currently collecting for DSLIDE and PICWS7 written by John Brochu, but all donations have to be received by September 8th. Give donations at the meetings to Byron Johnson. This shareware donation program has seen checks go out for Arcshell (Charles Johnson), Alarmclk (Cris Lathem), Intramdk (Randy Mears), and Dlside & Picsw7. Now, everyone should know that aSTarians *are not* software pirates, what's more, we support the writers of (good) public domain and shareware!

A note to Atari...ever think about the idea of dropping the Atari name from the ST and MEGA line? This might help the machines break into the business world. I finally saw my very first ever "business only" advertisement for a Mega in the Detroit Free Press just last week. After owning an ST for three years, it's about time!

See you at the September meeting! Just bought ST-Turbo and I love it! Steve Mileski

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Next Meeting: Oct. 5, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael SW, at 6:30 p.m. Write to GRASS at: 2440 Parkridge, SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

President	George Nosky	(616)942-1527
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Director	Steve Gilbert	(616)891-1785
Director	Marek Kulikowiec	(616)957-2646
Membership	Tim Feenstra	(616)784-6830

President's Comments by George Nosky

There is not much to report this month. We continued to have our monthly meetings throughout the summer. We had a lot of familiar faces and we gained a number of new members. By the time you read this, we will have had our September meeting and will have started to get organized for the coming year. If any of you have any ideas or thoughts on what you want the group to do, please let your officers and/or directors know. We will do our best to incorporate them.

I received a notice from the Library giving us permission to continue to meet there for the next year. As soon as we get a demo schedule together, we will publish it. Also, raffles will start again with the October meeting. Let us know what you want raffled off, and we will get it. Let's keep it under $30.

One last bit of news. The cost of MAM has gone up to 95 cents starting with the October issue. Pattie Rayl tells me the publishing cost has gone up, therefore this increase has to be passed on. Your treasury can absorb the increase, so we don't have to ask members for more money. See you at the October meeting.

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members get the Michigan Atari Magazine as part of their dues, and may purchase from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. These libraries are always growing with the 8bit library at more than 400 disks and the ST near 200! Eightbit disks are $3 and the ST disks are $4 each -- buy three and get a fourth free!. The most important benefit you receive is support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE members will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from computing.

The ST sig meets currently on the first Tuesday each month and there is a small charge to defray room-rental costs. If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from one of the club's libraries. Yearly dues are $20 per family, and meetings are the THIRD Tuesday at the Southfield Civic Center at Evergreen and 10-1/2 Mile. Contact MACE at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037.

President	Don Neff
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Corresponding Secretary	Ted Newkumet
Recording Secretary	Mike Olin
Treasurer	Heather Neff
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MACE weST	(313)582-0657 (3/12/2400)
MACE East	(313)978-8087 (3/1200)
The College Board	(313)478-9647 (3/1200)
Molin's Den	(313)420-0407 (3/1200)

Meeting Minutes

The August'88 meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held at the Southfield Civic Center on Tuesday, the 16th. President Don Neff called the meeting to order announcing a raffle later with prizes including TangleWood, the original Atari Writer and a 10-meg Winchester drive. Don announced the meeting topic for the evening was BBSes/Telecommunications including a demonstration of BB/ST from QMI by Bill Rayl.

Member Ken Van Dellen demonstrated a pd word processor called MultiLingual Writer, which features the option of typing in any of a number of foreign character sets. A GEM menu allows selection of English, French, German, Spanish, Swedish, Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Russian and math characters.

Bob Retelle and Bill Rayl spent several minutes discussing what's new in Atariland. A *few* minutes, actually, as there is not much going on during the summer months. There is apparently little to tell about Atari's efforts to open a factory in Texas; the new ST ROMs are due "soon;" Charles Johnson is releasing his replacement of the GDOS system (now called G+Plus); and the producers of GOE, the 8bit Graphics Operating Environment (lovingly dubbed "ST Jr") has taken a bit of a setback when Merrill Ward had a falling out with the programmer, so watch for a merger with the Diamond program.

Mike Lechkun announced Sig Hartmann approached MAGIC about another Atari show. For now, there are no definite plans.

Don presented the August MACE Appreciation award to Bob Retelle for his contributions in the past months.

Mike Lechkun announced the MACE East BBS IS still up, and he'd be happy to see a few more callers. The BBS features Z-Mag in the D/L library, and Mike introduced his co-SysOp, Rich Popchok. (The AMIS1200.BBS program is a MACE Proprietary System, and available with documentation for $6 by writing to the MACE P.O. Box listed elsewhere in this MACE section of MAM.)

Bob Retelle discussed his soon-to-be released Dungeon Master hintbook, published by Unicorn Publications, which will contain maps, hints, specific answers and a cross index in over 100 pages.

Bill Rayl demonstrated BB/ST from QMI, and showed members the complex but powerful features available. Bob Retelle gave an in-depth look at CompuServe's features. Pattie Rayl mentioned the deal Delphi has available, making Delphi cheaper per hour than GEnie.

Don announced the September meeting will be elections of new officers and requested members seriously consider becoming involved in the operation of the club. The raffle was held; the meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2 p.m. at the Zauel Library on Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are; September 17, October 15, 1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec	792-6029
Al Jennings	ST Librarian	790-1980
Ted Beauchamp	8bit Librarian	686-8872
Char Davis	8bit Editor	686-4170

Club dues are $20 per year. For this fee you get MAM, support for both the 8bits and STs, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8bit disks and 50 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1 each, and ST disks cost $2 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew, then do it now!

Note From the President

Where is everybody? We miss you and have lots of exciting things to show you! Our attendance has been down, and I'm hoping it's the hot weather, although the library IS air conditioned! I'd like to see a large attendance at the September meeting (come on, make me feel good!!). I'll also bring in my usual 'Disk of the Month'. If you're looking to upgrade your system, there are great deals on Mega 2 STs! If you're interested in a system, give me a call, and I'll give you the info!

STill to Come!

The month of September will bring some exciting demos! Neil Demo will show us DeskCart. This is a cartridge that offers printer setup features, a ram disk, a printer spooler, and lots more. After Neil is finished, LeRoy will demo IMG Scan by Seymor Radix. This slick little device attaches to your printer and scans images into your ST. And, as usual, LeRoy will display the new Disk of the Month for the ST library! Look for X-Former II, Dcopy 1.97, and more! Show up at the meeting and let us know what you expect from your club!

RelicST to Relish!

The August meeting started with Marty Schmidt's demo of NeoDesk, the desktop alternative by Gribnif Software. The customized icons really look impressive, and it's easy to tell the difference between text files and programs. The ability to install your favorite program on the desktop as an icon is fantastic. Imagine having Twister and a hard drive park program available simply by pointing at an icon and clicking! Marty was very pleased with the package, and highly recommended it!

LeRoy then demoed Shadow, the new telecommunications utility by Antic Software. This program is a must have for anyone with a modem! After LeRoy demoed Shadow, it was raffled off, and our newest club member won it. The meeting ended with LeRoy demoing the latest Disk of the Month. See you at the next meeting!

8bit Equipment Volunteers for September:

Club	800 XL
Char Davis	Color TV
Disk Drive	Ted Beauchamp

ST Equipment Volunteers for September:

Neil Demo	520 ST & Disk Drive
Marty Schmidt	Monitor
LeRoy Valley	Printer, IMG Scan, Hard Drive

Remember, if you're bringing equipment, please bring all of the necessary cables (power cords, monitor cords, mouses, etc.).

General Meeting Minutes

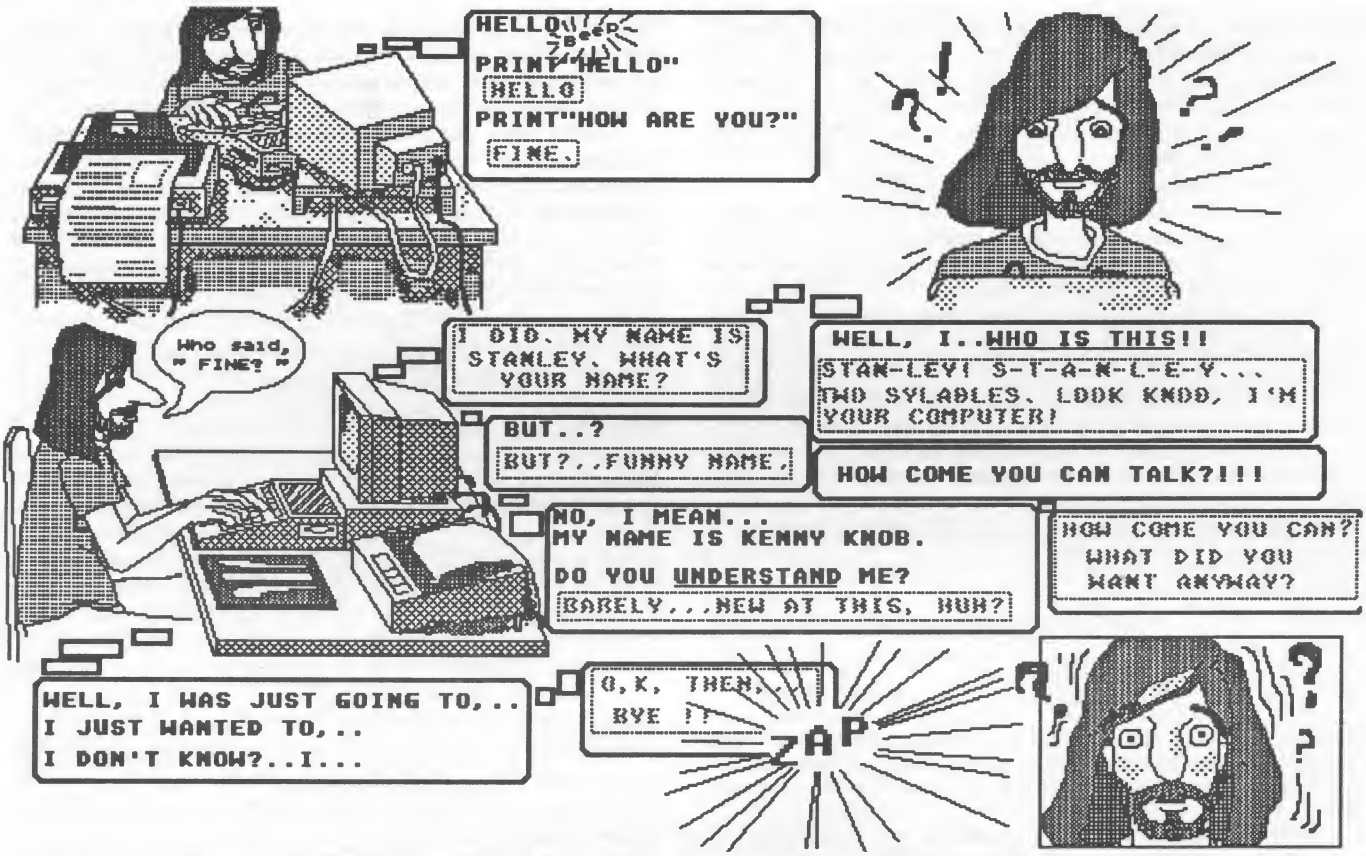
The August meeting was held at State Street Computer in Ann Arbor. President Jon Brode called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. announcing Newsletter Editor Mike Ranger has accepted a promotion and no longer is able to be Editor. Jon asked the members for nominations. No one accepted, so the officers will discuss the vacancy at their next meeting (8/30).

Member Bob Fritz of C.P. Technology led a discussion of ST memory upgrades. Bob noted there are several kits available that require no (or little) soldering and felt the E-Z Ram kit is the easiest to install. Tech Specialities and E.Arthur Brown also produce good kits. Russ Crum announced a special disk was available containing text files discussing various hardware projects that can be performed on the ST. Russ said any member wanting copies of uncommon pd software should call him so he bring copies to the next meeting. Howard Chu discussed upgrading hard drives; Craig Harvey discussed building surge protection devices; Mike Olin demonstrated DeskCart and Dick Selke showed a booklet "Mods, Fixes & Upgrades" for the 8bit. Dick then described the methods he will use to indicate when memberships are about to expire. Members should pay attention to the mailing label on their issue of MAM. The following themes for upcoming meetings are: September, word processors; October, emulators; November, drawing/cad; December, Christmas Party. The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

From the Treasurer:

We had a fair amount of disk sales for July, good work gang! Our new members for July are Steven and Penney Filler, from Columbia Falls, Montana. They have an 8bit and ST. Welcome to the group! If anyone would like to correspond with them , contact me and I'll give you their address.

Notice: to all future and renewal members of WAUG. The membership fee is $15 per year, which includes 12 meetings and 12 issues of MAM. Please make you check or money order to Dick Selke, and mail to 31139 Cooley Dr., Westland, MI 48185, or bring cast to a meeting.


HELLO!
PRINT"HELLO"
HELLO
PRINT"HOW ARE YOU?"
FINE.
Who said, " FINE? "
I DID. MY NAME IS STANLEY. WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
WELL, I..WHO IS THIS!!
STAN-LEY! S-T-A-N-L-E-Y... TWO SYLABLES. LOOK KNOB, I'M YOUR COMPUTER!
BUT..?
BUT?..FUNNY NAME.
HOW COME YOU CAN TALK?!!!
NO, I MEAN... MY NAME IS KENNY KNOB.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?
BARELY...NEW AT THIS, HUH?
HOW COME YOU CAN? WHAT DID YOU WANT ANYWAY?
WELL, I WAS JUST GOING TO,.. I JUST WANTED TO,.. I DON'T KNOW?..I...
O.K. THEN... BYE !!

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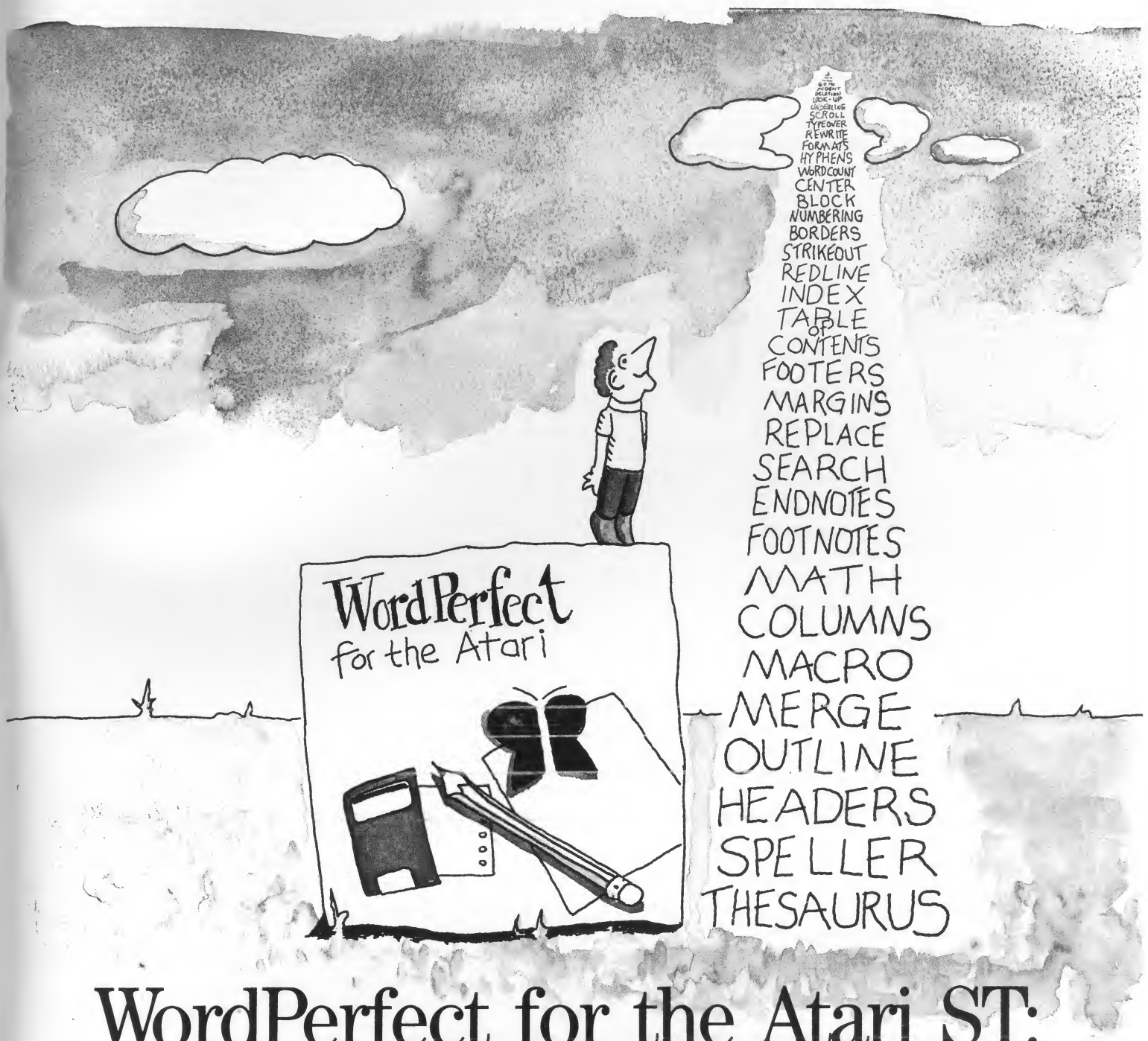

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Atari name/ Logo 1" x 1" Sew on patch $5pk (5 patches)
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1020 Plotter paper Reg. $3.50 pk Sale $2.95pk
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Many people have asked which Mailing List program we use at Best Electronics, we currently use Super Mailer+ from Royal Software. Super Mailer program (D) $39.95
XL to XE Software Compatiablty Mod by Tom Lawless. This two chip/switch mod is for enhanced 800XL computers (256K-512K). $8
Hardware upgrade kits and P.C. boards that require the 41256K ram chips have been put on hold because of the high price of ram chips. We hope to ship again once ram chip prices start to drop down!

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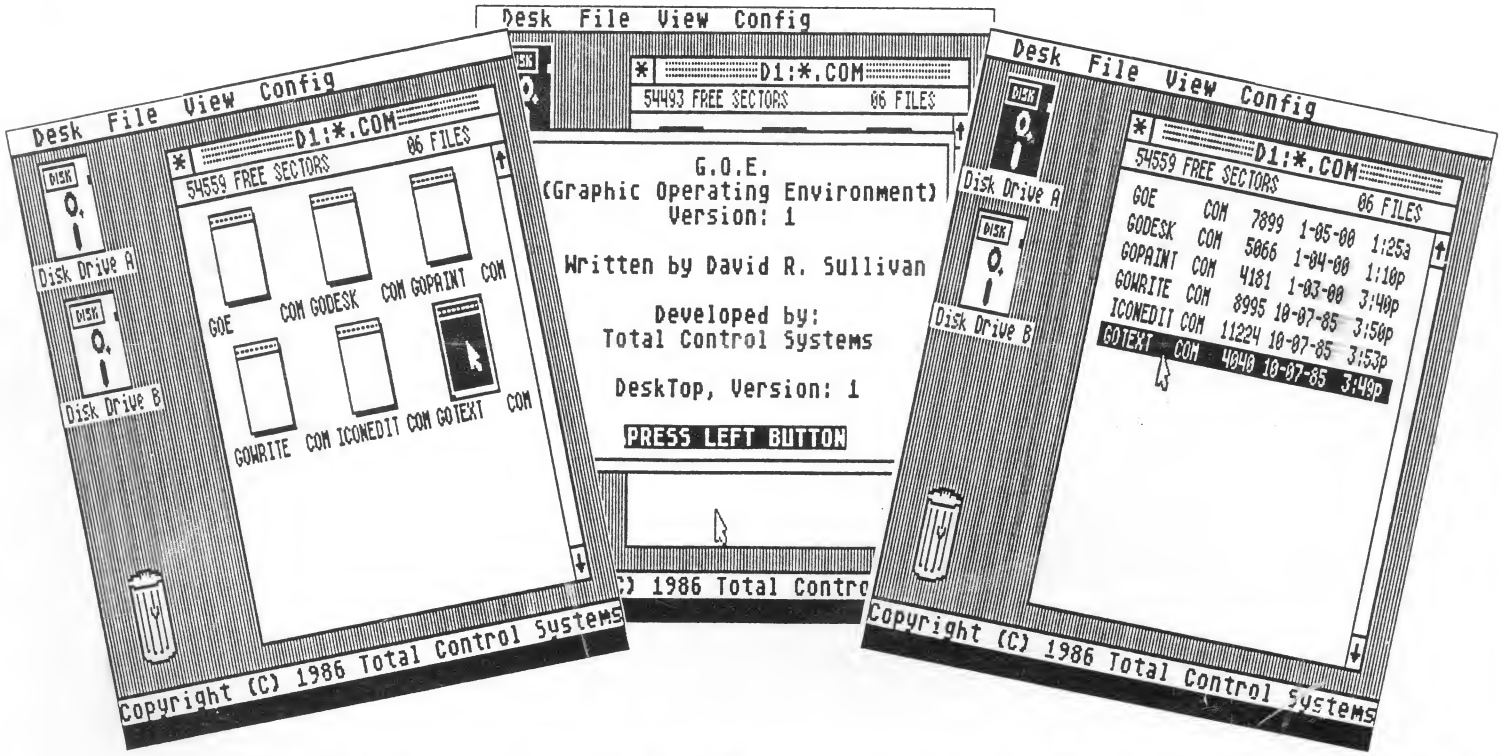
Get Up and GOE!



ST-Like Graphic Operating System

For Atari 8bit

Also In This Issue

ST PictaScan and IMG Scan
Word Perfect — Nite Lite BBS
NewsStation and News Station Companion
BBS Blocking (A Serious Threat to Free Speech)
XF551 Disk Drive Power LED Modification
Accelerating the ST

and MORE ...

New ST Version

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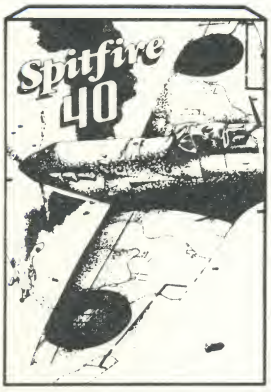
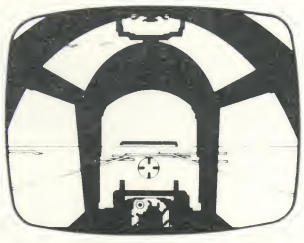
Spitfire 40





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MAM this Month

Features

Editorial Ramblings	2
Atari News and Comment	4
Word Perfect, Six Months Later (ST)	6
News Station/News Station Companion (8bit)	8
Accelerating the ST (ST)	10
Nite Lite BBS (ST)	12
Scanner Wars, ST PictaScan vs. IMG Scan (ST)	14
Impressions of the XF551 (8bit)	18
Tell It To Atari -- Mail In Your Concerns	20
Stanley and Knob	21
XF551 Power LED Modification (8bit)	23
Hey, I've Been on Vacation	24
Blocking of Long Distance Phone Calls	26
Telecommunicating Tips	29
Get Up and GOE! (8bit)	31

Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	28
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	28
GAG	(Flint, MI)	29
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	29
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	29
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	30
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	30
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	31
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	31

Advertisers

Word Perfect Corporation	3
The Sterling Connection	5
Practical Solutions	5
E. Arthur Brown Co.	7
Brad Roltgen	9
Toad Computer Services	11
Sideline Software	11
Compu-tegrity	17
Alpha Systems	19
Irata Verlag	22
Terrific Corp.	22
Application and Design Software	22
State Street Computer	30
Proco Products	30
Best Electronics	30
Mars Merchandising	31
Computer Concepts	32
IB Computer	33
Avalon Hill Game Company	Inside Front Cover
Innovative Concepts	Inside Back Cover
Rite way Computers	Back Cover

Volume 3, No. 9 October 1988

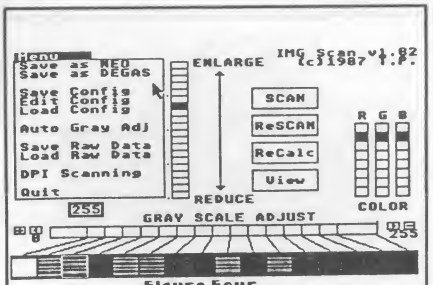
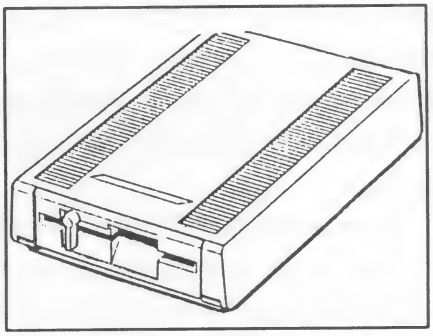


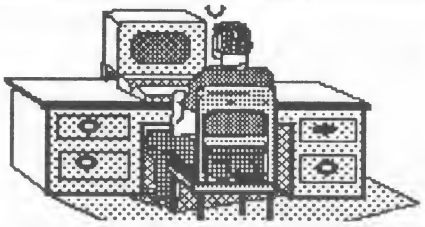
Figure Four

Scanner Wars Page 14



XF551 Double Feature
Impressions Page 18
Add a Power LED Page 23

GOE Cartridge Page 31



Editorial Ramblings

This month, Jerry Cross (GAG) brings us news from Iowa about BBS blocking that has potentially serious consequences to all telecommunications, and a call from David Sullivan of Total Control Systems brought us some very good news about the 8bit GOE cartridge. Leroy Valley (TAG) returns with an ST Notes' head-to-head comparison of IMG Scan and ST Pictascan, while Tom Sturza (MACE) gives us a taste of 8bit desktop publishing with Reeve Software's News Station and News Station Companion.

If you're an ST owner who wants to put your machine into maximum overdrive, Bryon Johnson (GLASS) gives an overview of products to enhance the speed of your ST. We also have an XF551 double-feature where Brent Fisher (CACE) reviews Atari's double-density drive and Dave Bryant (GKAUG) shows how to add a Power Indicator LED to make life with the XF551 a little easier. All this, and more, including Gordon Totty's (MACE) entertaining "Vacation" article, awaits inside.

MAM has been getting more national attention lately, with a recent article in ZMag #120. While we don't agree with many of the comments made by John Deegan, we have talked with Ron Kovacs and Zmag will be printing our reply in an upcoming edition. Look for it on your local bulletin board, and your comments are more than welcome!!

Until next month,

Bill & Pattie Rayl

People Who Make It All Possible

Managing Ed: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Comic Strip: Steve Volker
Contributors: David Bryant, Jerry Cross, Brent Fisher, Byron Johnson, John Nagy, Jim Schmickley, Rod Smith, Tom Sturza, Gordon Totty, LeRoy Valley, and all the participating user groups.

What We Are

The Michigan Atari Magazine is a monthly magazine which also serves as the official newsletter of several independent Atari User Groups and is not affiliated with Atari Corp in any way.

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Authors: When submitting articles, please provide both printed and magnetic form when possible. AtariWriter/ST Writer or ASCII preferred. Submissions may also be uploaded to the Treasure CheST BBS, (313) 973-9137 (3/12/2400 baud). Deadline is the 17th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.

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Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by Bill Rayl

At the top of the Atari news this month, plans for AtariFests seem to be going well in a number of areas. As I write this, the Glendale Atari Fest in California is winding to a close. Although attendance was reportedly not as great as hoped, the show was a good one.

Dave Small was there selling his Spectre 128, the Macintosh emulator that uses 128K ROMs, allowing ST owners to run HyperCard applications and piles of other excellent Mac applications. Dave's new company is Gadgets by Small.

Also at the show, Charles Johnson and John Eidsvoog of Codehead Software were selling their G+Plus GDOS replacement and Multi-desk, a great utility that allows ST owners to load as many desk accessories as memory permits. You can even load new accessories after the system is up and running or from within a running program. (Codehead Software, PO Box 4336, North Hollywood, CA 91607)

Application and Design Software was displaying version 2 of the very popular Universal Item Selector, Regent Software was there with their excellent line of database and productivity products and Supra was demonstrating their line of hard drives for Atari machines. And, yes, Atari was there as well!

Also, a company called JRI was showing GenLock, an impressive piece of hardware for ST owners interested in professional video applications. GenLock will be available soon for the Megas and is in development for 520/1040s. This hardware allows for composite video output to NTSC RS-170/A devices and provides separate jacks for video input, video output and audio output as well as allows an additional RGB monitor jack for viewing combined computer images. Professional video artists and animators will definitely be interested in this product! (JRI, PO Box 5277, Pittsburg, CA 94565)

The two graphic operating environments for the 8bit Atari were both at the show. Reeve Software was selling Diamond OS for $30. Word is the disk-based Diamond can support up to 16 megs of internal memory.

A bigger splash was made by Total Control Systems, who was demonstrating the GOE cartridge-based ST-like environment. According to show attendees, GOE "looks like a total close of the ST's GEM," and performed beautifully during the entire show. [Editors' Note: See the article on the GOE Cartridge elsewhere in this issue.

The long-awaited SpartaDOS X cartridge was at the show, and ICD was selling them for $80. The "piggyback" cartridge allows other cartridges to plug directly in, and improvements to the DOS include allowing over 1,000 files per directory, faster disk access and built-in ARC and ALFcrunch support.

Other Atari shows on the calendar are the Washington, DC area show which should have ended before you read this (October 2-3), and the Toronto AtariFest which will be held on November 6th. Sponsored by the Toronto Atari Federation (TAF), the one-day show will feature a number of new product demonstrations, lectures and hands-on workshops. Atari Canada will also be there. For more info, call (416) 425-5357 or contact TAF's president, Jim Clark, at (416) 928-1143. Exhibitors should contact Jim Jorritsma at (416) 242-3413.

On the Michigan front, MAGIC has reported the October meeting with Atari officials has been cancelled. Atari reportedly cancelled the meeting because it was too close to COMDEX. Here at MAM, we sincerely hope an AtariFest does happen in Michigan in the near future because all area user groups benefit from the interaction with each other these shows bring about. There is a possibility an Atari Fest will take place here with or without Atari's involvement, but nothing definite has gotten to us about that possibility.

A 16bit XL/XE?

On the 8bit Atari horizon, DataQue Software of Ontario, Ohio, has announced a hardware upgrade allowing 8bit Atarians to put a 16bit CPU into their machine. This gives you the speed and power of a 16bit computer and the ability to add up to 16 megs of internal memory! And the best part is that, since the upgrade uses an 65C02 processor (the only direct 16bit descendant of the 6502), the hard-

ware maintains compatibility with most of the software available for the machines.

The Turbo-816 is slated for availability in November and will come with Turbo-OS that will contain a floating point library built-in. Other products DataQue reports are planned include a real-time multi-tasking operating system kernal, a new assembler/editor/debugger supporting the new assembly instructions and addressing modes, a new BASIC and K&R- compatible C package, a graphic operating system called Turbo- GOS and a developer's kit. For more information, contact DataQue Software, Dept. T-800, PO Box 134, Ontario, Ohio 44862.

8bit peripherals on the ST

Darek Mihocka, programmer of the ST Transformer 8bit Atari emulator, is working on an interface that will allow Atari 8bit SIO peripherals to connect directly to the ST, primarily for use with the Transformer. Currently, Darek's emulator has support for player missile graphics and has shaped up to be a very impressive piece of work. MAM has always been very supportive of the 8bit emulator, and we applaud Darek for all the work he's done. Keep up the great work, Darek, it's definitely appreciated!

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Mouse Master is another innovative switchbox that allows you to instantly switch between your mouse and joystick (or other controller)! You can also plug in a second joystick so there's no more frustrating cable swapping. It's compact case is attractively styled in a neutral gray color and a 26" cable is included for comfortable use by either right or left-handers. For the Atari ST or Commodore Amiga. $39.95*.

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THE MASTER SERIES

WordPerfect for the Atari ST
Six Months and Three Revisions Later

by Rod Smith (WAUG)

In the March, 1988 issue of MAM, I reviewed WordPerfect, then a barely finished program which should still have been in beta testing. I concluded that "most people should avoid WordPerfect" because they "would be happier with Word Writer, or perhaps the new version of 1st Word." I did make an exception for people eligible for the educational discount on the program, but only if such people really *needed* the power offered by WordPerfect.

In the half year since that time, three more revisions to the program have been released. (Perhaps more; it's hard to keep track of these disks they keep sending me!) The latest, the August 1st version, I received a couple of weeks ago. I am glad to say it addresses most of the bugs present in the original release of WordPerfect. Even in earlier revisions, program crashes became a rarity.

Problems with proportional printing have been fixed, although not all printer definitions are set up to support this feature. The "Reveal Codes" window no longer scrolls annoyingly every time the cursor is moved. Accidentally choosing to save a file in "locked" form no longer prevents saving it without a password. In sum, the list of fixed bugs is almost as long as the list of bugs was in January.

Note, however, that I say it is *almost* as long. There are still bugs, including some which can cause a great deal of annoyance and lost time. As mentioned, printer definitions may not support proportional printing; and although it is easy enough (now) to fix this, the user should not have to do it, and many would not know how to do it.

Table of contents generation has problems with certain styles. The built-in print spooler may choke under certain conditions. And it is still possible to crash the program, although the only way I know to do it is by entering a particular sequence of changes in the setup module.

WordPerfect now delivers on much of its promise

In sum, the program is not bug-free, despite the claims made by WordPerfect Corporation they had released a fixed version. (These claims, incidentally, were also made about the previous release, which had twice as many bugs as the current one does.)

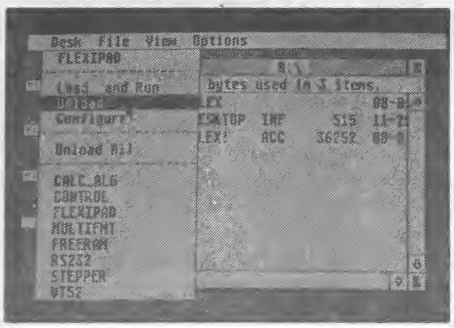
Given WordPerfect is now a usable program, even by relative novices, my recommendations can change, although they are now less simple. Because of its complexity, the program is not easy to learn to use, although it isn't difficult once learned.

The manual is also good in teaching the novice to use the program. Those who are scared off by complexity might thus be best to avoid WordPerfect in favor of a simpler program. As six months ago, Word Writer and ST Writer spring to mind as good alternatives. This is not to say novices need necessarily avoid WordPerfect; if you are willing to invest some time and effort into learning a program, need the features, and are willing to pay the price, go ahead and buy. Be aware, however, that WordPerfect does not conform to many of the ST's standards, and it may occasionally behave in unexpected ways. Don't be afraid to use WordPerfect's customer support; if you bought the program, you've certainly paid for it! If you're a seasoned computer user who's looking for a word processor with more uumph than others on the ST market, WordPerfect is the only choice, and no longer a bad one. However, some of the more sophisticated features may not work 100% as advertised.

Given that WordPerfect Corporation has released four updates total, however, chances are good that they will fix what bugs remain. Be sure to report any you discover, though; they can't fix an esoteric bug which they don't know exists.

Students and educators looking for a word processor should give WordPerfect even more serious consideration, since WordPerfect Corporation offers the program for only $100 on an educational discount.

In sum, WordPerfect now delivers on much of its promise. It's still not for everybody -- a program of its complexity and price cannot be -- but it is the program for those who are serious about their word processing.



Flexcessory!

Loads/Dumps Up to 15 Utilities W/O ReBooting

The original "Accessory" system is a good idea. But, the requirement that accessory files be present at boot-up makes it tough to have the right ones present when you need them, keeps you from freeing up RAM when you need it, and generally makes it a headache to use any more than the barest essentials as accessories. New *Flexcessory* is an add-in system that solves these problems and gives desktop access the power it was meant to have. It takes up one slot and provides 15 of it's own. Loads/Runs/Dumps .PRG, .TOS, and .TTP programs rather than memory grabbing .ACC ones (you still have 5 slots for those). *Flexcessory* comes with 21 utilities including RAM Disk, Print Spooler, Control Panel, RS232 Configuration, VT52 Emulator, Install Printer, Calculators, Formatting Utilities, Notepad, Disk Utilities, Corner Clock/Date and more. *Flexcessory* itself takes only 50K of RAM! By Insight!

127-410 ST Flexcessory (S&H 2.50) $29.95

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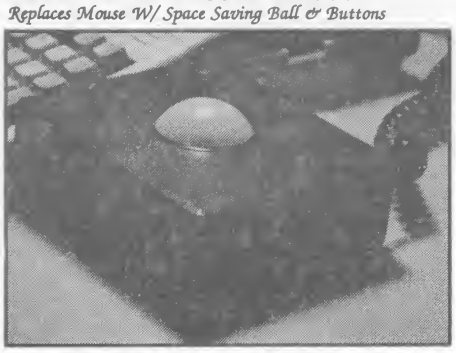

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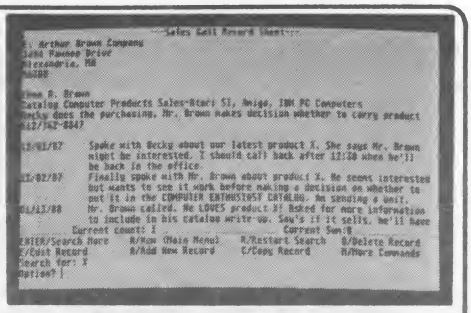

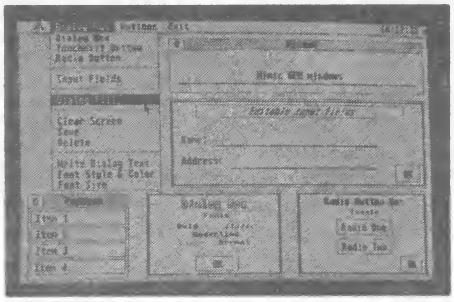

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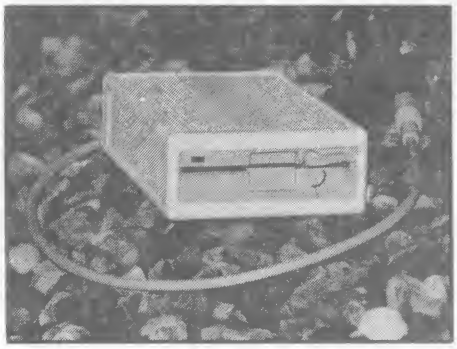

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8Bit Atari Desktop Publishing
News Station from Reeve Software

Review by Tom Sturza (MACE)

Once upon a time, back in the days before Atari ST computers, 8bit computers were used to create many User Group newsletters. The vast majority of articles were written using word processors, and the newsletter editor then did a cut 'n paste job prior to sending everything to the printer.

The term "Desktop Publishing" hadn't been coined yet. Many of the features that we would one day see in such products were already being used, but not in one software package. Articles were either delivered to the editor on floppy disks or uploaded to the User Group's BBS. The editor then printed these articles on one printer (so the newsletter looked the same throughout the entire issue). If an author or newsletter editor wished to "dress up" their work with pictures, they were printed separately and then pasted onto the desired page. Print Shop (tm) icons became very popular.

Well, Reeve Software has introduced Desktop Publishing for Atari 8bit computers. The News Station and the News Station Companion were recently released as typesetting programs for these computers. Text and graphics can now be combined onto one page using just one program. No more cut 'n paste! Custom print fonts and different sizes of text can be used to create unique output. The program documentation says "a high quality, professional look" can be given to printed materials created using this product. I'll let you be the judge of that when you look over the sample page I've created.

My initial feelings concerning The News Station and it's Companion program are mixed. I agree that Reeve Software has created a much needed product for 8bit Atari computers. For the most part, the software does what the program documentation says it will do. However, there are limits concerning the amount of text (number of words) that will fit on a page/plate. Other features, or the lack of features, in this software also affected my opinion.

First, look at the sample page following this article. I've included the main features of The News Station and it's Companion program on this page. Rather than repeat this information, I'll assume that you've read through the sample as I continue with this review.

As you can see, the sample page is divided into eight sections or plates (two across by four down). The top two plates are displayed as one double-wide plate. It was created using the "expand plate" option of the Companion program. Each section or plate had to be created separately and saved to a work disk. The creation of plates is done in the EDITOR option of The News Station program. Once all plates are saved, the PRESS option is used to select plate order and to actually print the whole page.

Text can be entered either by typing directly into a plate or by loading ASCII text files. The EDITOR supports different sized text characters from "1 by 1" to "8 by 8." I entered the majority of the sample page using a width and height of "1 by 1." When using the "1 by 1" character size, each plate can hold a maximum of 20 lines, with 40 characters per line. However, if you do so, side by side plates will "run together." I recommend limiting text to 35-36 characters per line.

Even though The News Station can load ASCII text files into a plate, the small size of each plate effectively limits the usefulness of this feature. Text is loaded starting at the current cursor location on the plate being edited. Since the program does NOT have "word wrap" capability, you must not exceed 40 characters per line or 20 lines per page (in "1 by 1" size) or text will be lost. This means that your ASCII text file must have [RETURN] characters at the end of each line and you must control how many lines will be used when you type your text on your word processor.

The News Station EDITOR does not have a full-featured word processor (and Reeve Software makes no claims that it does). It does not support word wrap, insert mode or "delete and shift remaining characters to the left." Also, a spell checker is not provided. You type to the end of a line and hit [RETURN] to advance to the next line (just like using a typewriter). The left margin position can be set by placing the cursor in the desired

column and pressing [CONTROL]-M. However, you cannot set a value for the right margin. If you wish to change already entered text, you can type over it or delete backspace. I believe you can see why I don't think that The NewsStation was really intended for use on large newsletters or for large articles. On 8bits, a word processor would still be my first choice. The program documentation mentions "you will now have the power to design signs, posters, notices, brochures, advertisements and other literature," and I agree. News Station will handle smaller print jobs with ease. For example, a 2-3 page newsletter that covers a few short items on each page would work just fine. News Station is ideally suited to such information. Print Shop(tm) icons (pictures) could also be used to "dress up" the document. The final product would have an "attention grabber" appearance when compared to using just a word processor.

Some additional comments: The program documentation is well done but could use some clarification. I did find a few typos and omissions that would be confusing to the first time user. I have written to Reeve Software concerning these items.

Print Shop(tm) icons can be printed in three different sizes and can be placed almost anywhere on a plate. You can use the plate EDITOR graphics mode to change and/or draw pictures. Any 9 sector print font can be used for text. I found many of the fonts on the MACE Print Shop(tm) label maker program diskette worked well. The program supports many of the popular printers.

Reeve Software has delivered a well thought-out and executed software package. However, I believe a few changes and/or additions to the documentation and programs will make The News Station and The NewsStation Companion even better products for 8bit Atari computers. If you wish additional information, you can contact: Reeve Software, 29W150 Old Farm Lane, Warrenville, IL 60555 (312) 393-2317. The News Station is $29.95, and the News Station Companion retails for $29.95.

NEWS STATION RELEASED FOR ATARI 8-BIT COMPUTERS

FEATURES:

* Compatible with any standard 9 sector print font
* Will load ASCII files into editor
* Adjustable character height & width
* Load Print Shop(TM) icons directly into the editor
* Compatible with standard picture files
* Graphics mode uses joystick, Koala Pad or keyboard
* Set margins & line spacing for text
* Supports the following printers:
  Star SG10/NX10/gemini 10X
  Panasonic 1080/1090 series
  Prowriter Citizen 120D
  ATARI XMM801 Epson MX80/RX80

The News Station is designed to create a one page document, made up of eight plates (or sections). These plates are then printed two across and four down the page.

The "Plate Manipulator" feature found on the News Station Companion was used to create the title or heading section at the top of this page.

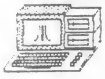
First a single plate was created; then the plate was expanded into two side by side plates. This feature creates a PLATE1 and PLATE2 when used.

NEWS STATION MAIN FEATURES

The News Station has 2 main features:

1) A Plate Editor that allows you to combine graphics and text on the same plate; and to SAVE each plate to a work diskette.

2) The Press, that supports selected print drivers or allows you to build custom ones. It is here that you choose the order you wish to print your plates and then actually print the page.



HARDWARE USED TO TEST THE NEWS STATION

* ATARI 130XE COMPUTER
* ATARI 1050 DISK DRIVE
* ATARI 850 INTERFACE UNIT
* PROWRITER PRINTER

NEWS STATION COMPANION

FEATURES:
1) PLATE MANIPULATOR expands plates vertically or horizontally; or centers a plate horizontally.
2) KOALA CONVERTER converts Koala Pad pictures into News Station format.
3) LIBRARIAN compresses 8 plates into one compact file.
4) ASCII CONVERTER for converting word processor files.

When using height and width equal to one, you can have a text plate that contains up to 20 lines of print, forty characters per line.

You can load a Print Shop icon almost anywhere on the plate (program will tell you if you are too close to an edge).

However, when placing plates next to one another, you cannot use forty characters per line, because the text will run together.

Different **SIZES** of text can be mixed on each plate.

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Accelerating the ST

by Byron Johnson (GLASS)

Just recently, I had to put my ST in the shop for repairs (I sure wish Atari had provided a connector for memory expansion) and borrowed another one from a friend. It made me realize how many improvements I had made to speed up the operation and make "computering" more enjoyable and productive. Perhaps you may benefit from my trials and tribulations in searching for the "Fastest ST alive."

First of all, let's concentrate on the existing features, then we'll move into the add-ons. The Control Panel Accessory is probably the best known ACC but the least utilized. Did you know that by changing the key repeat rate and key delay rate you can speed up page and line scrolling within programs like word processing, database, spreadsheets, and telecommunications programs not to mention practically every other text-orientated program. The slider next to the "finger on a key" changes the key delay rate, useful for typing a row of dashes or moving across the page horizontally. The slider next to the rabbit and turtle controls "key repeat rate" and determines how many characters a second will be generated from holding down a key. Both of these keys need to be changed as your typing gets faster and you progress in this crazy game we call computing.

Next is the mouse double-click rate. It's the numbers 0 to 4 with the two mice next to them. It controls how fast or slow you can click the mouse and select an item. This also will change as your typing improves. Use a lower number to speed up the click select rate.

Whenever you first turn on your ST, you should always make a point of setting the date and time. This makes it easy to determine when you wrote a document and if it's a new or old version of a document. Since I use a monochrome monitor about 90 percent of the time, I like to reverse the colors, a black background and white letters.

This is a lot easier on my tired eyes after staring at a monitor at work all day. With color monitors, using a medium blue, green, brown or black with a light color for text does about the same thing. Of course, after setting up the system the way you want, be sure and save the desktop for your next session. I sure wish this would work on the IBMs at work!

Now for the real goodies. Let's start with Universal Item Selector Version 2. When you run a word processor program, a file selector box will pop up on the screen and ask you for a file name to load or create. If you need a file from another drive, you have to click on the path line above the box and retype the line to access another drive. This gets to be a pain in the neck after a while. With Universal, just click the new drive letter, and it gets the directory for you with a single click. Plus it's faster than the built-in selector because it's written in assembly language. It also adds dozens of new and easier to use commands like MOVE, PRINT, RAM FREE, FIND, LOCK/UNLOCK FILES, and better disk formatting commands, etc. For eighteen dollars, it's a steal. You won't believe how much improved the ST is with this one.

Next is Turbo ST Version 2. This is a optimized version of existing text routines written in assembly language. Once again, much faster response and improved operation from this 41 dollar program.

If you do a lot of printing, then a external hardware print buffer is a natural. This will allow you to print documents, text files, readme files and so on without tying up the computer. This one add-on feature alone will increase your productivity many times over. Even if only printing mailing or disk labels, or occasional doc files from the desktop, this buffer keeps you thinking and involved with your computer instead of waiting for a print-out to end.

The newest program in my auto folder is Mouse Doubler. It doubles the movement of the cursor, so you don't move the mouse as far as you used to. The little guy really moves! Next is a ram disk to speed up archive and un-archive operations, run compilers for programming languages, view slides very quickly and so many more applications. Many fine public domain ram disks are available, my favorite is STI_RAM from ST Informer. This software creates a disk drive of any size in RAM mem-

ory. Assuming you have enough memory to run it (one megabyte usually needed).

If you've read this far, maybe a hard drive is in your future. Programs will load typically in four seconds not the usual twenty seconds from a 3.5" micro drive. Files also save much faster to a hard drive. The organizational capabilities keep all your regularly used software at your fingertips. Practically no time lost looking for a disk, plus you can configure the program just the way you want it and add on public domain upgrades and additional features without running out of disk space.

AND don't forget about the new TOS (Tramiel Operating System) due out this fall from Atari. I hear it's already available to developers, and is the first significant improvement made to the ST since TOS was put on ROM.

In the future, the Turbo ST folks are working on a graphics version of Turbo ST to speed up GEM functions. With the present success of the text version, I can't wait for the graphics version. As for Atari's blitter chip, where is the blitter chip? I wonder if Atari will ever optimize and rewrite the operating system in assembly language, add multi-tasking, improve the hard drive capabilities (expanding the partition limit from 4 to 12 or more), expand the partition size from 16 to 32 megabytes, add better built-in sound, better graphics, a faster microprocessor, plug-in memory expansion modules and a math co-processor? Well, I can hope, can't I?

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Nite Lite BBS System

by Jerry Cross (GAG)

I have always wanted to run a multi-line bbs! I would drool over the ads for those multi-modem cards for the IBM, or listen to the ravings of those Amiga owners bragging about their multi-tasking computers that can run multi-line BBSes (they never mentioned how they would hook up several modems to the single RS232 plug though!). So, I just sat around waiting for Michtron to come through with their long-promised interface, and stared at the pile of modems I own, now stacked 5 high!

Then, one day I received a letter in the mail. A small company named Nite Lite Systems was selling a bbs system that would allow up to 7 lines to be connected to an Atari ST, and they would even throw in the software as part of their promotion. Well, I jumped on deal right away.

The entire bbs system comes in two parts. One is the interface, the other is the software. Since the interface is capable of working on any type of computer supporting RS232 communications. I will review each of these separately. First, the interface.

The interface is actually a multiplexer, sort of like a self-contained computer with it's own memory, processor and operating system. There are several modems. The SP480 (4-line interface) and SP 808(8-line interface) use a 65C02 processor, and have 8k of memory. The SP432 and SP832 interface are identical, but contain 32K of RAM instead of 8K. This allows you to program the interface in many ways, such as allowing it to be a self-contained BBS system all by itself. All you would need to do would be to connect any computer with a standard RS232 port and set it up. Once set up it would run on it's own, allowing you to remove the computer for other uses.

The Nite Lite interface will work with any modem that supports the DTR pin, allowing the interfact to take control of the modem. This allows you to use many of the inexpensive dumb modems on the market, and can save you several hundred dollars in modem costs. However, if you are using a Hayes compatible or some other "smart" modem you may have some problems. I have had some difficulty resetting the modems after each call, which could be easily fixed by sending a string of initialzation commands to the modem. But the interface does not allow this.

One of the many possibilities of using a self-contained BBS on the SP432/832 interfaces would be to set up a remote location and allow other interfaces to connect into it. For example, by setting up an interface in a city supported by PC Pursuit, you could connect a number of other bulletin boards together at little cost, allowing for a "nationwide" conferencing network! One obvious use of this interface would be to connect several computer terminals together for a point of sales system or some other sort of shared networking system. David Beckmeyer currently sells MTC shell that would work nicely for such an application.

The interface itself is well built, and so far I have had no serious problems with it, other than having the transformer burn out. But since it uses a standard type of power supply picked up at Radio Shack, this was only a minor inconvenience.

There is one problem, however, with the interface. Since this is actually just another type of computer, you need software to operate with it. A computer without software is doomed to failure. So far, none of the software companies have taken interest in this product, which is a shame. The possible applications this product could be used for is endless. A multi line bbs is only one example. How about using it in a classroom to share a single printer and hard drive with a number of other computers? Remember, you only need one Atari ST to act as host (and none at all if you used the SP-432/832 interface). You could connect RS232 compatible directly into the interface ports, so you could use inexpensive computers to access the program.

The second part of this product is the software. As I mentioned before, none of the software companies have decided to support the Nite Lite interface, so they had to write their own. In reviewing the software, it's necessary to compare it to other products, such as Express ST, Forum, BB/ST, and many other programs. Each of these programs has good and bad points, but many SysOps will swear the one they use it the best. Also, there are four points that should be considered when looking at software. It's file transfer capabilities, it's message handling, how user friendly it is, and how easy it is for the SysOp to maintain.Also, the recent crop of BBS programs must be more flexible and allow the sysop to program other features into it, like games or application programs. More

powerful programs allow for running TOS programs or other types of "doors."

Another thing to consider is the cost. With public domain programs you get what you pay for, so you can't complain. Others, like Express and Forem, run around $50-75. Nite Lite sells their program for $99. I received my software free as part of a user group promotion package. Even so, this software comes in as the most expensive software of all the Atari ST bbs programs.

So, how does Nite Lite stack up to these programs? *Terrible!* When I started investigating this program to see if I should buy it, it was still new. There were very few Nite Lite BBSes I could call to check out the way the program worked, and the few that were out there had very limited access. This is understandable since the cost of operating a multi-line bbs is not cheap, and they were asking for user fees (which I also did to a limited extent). There are a few things that Nite Lite does very well. Since it was written to take advantage of the features of the Nite Lite interface, it handles inter-port communications very well. The chat room feature is one of the most often used features on my board. It also has a Linked Chat feature, which allows me to call another bbs using Nite Lite software and link my chat room into theirs, allowing more callers to chat together. On several occasions, I used PC Pursuit to connect with a board in Washington DC, and this was a huge success.

There is another feature that has proven popular, but was not supported very well by the software. The author wrote in the ability to call out on one of the unused lines, so you would not have to take down your BBS if you wanted to use it for calling out. It even allowed the sysop to call in from a distant location, and then call out on another line.

Well, I saw some interesting applications for this feature. I live in Flint, which is in the center of Genesee County, and surrounded by many smaller townships. It is a local call from my home to nearly all of the county, but is would be a long distance call for one township to call another. So, I decided to set up my bbs to act as a "gateway," which would allow my users to call all over the county without having to pay any long distance charges. But since this was not the original intent of the author's use of this feature, it creates a lot of difficult problems for the user. They must make several tricky command entries, and if they make one mistake, they could lock up the bbs. Several conversations with the author of this program has done nothing to fix this problem, which could be a major feature and selling point of his software.

OK, as for the other features, let's take a look at each one and compare them to other systems. Nite Lite only supports one download protocol, X-modem. And this is not even the CRC version, but the older version. Now, this is not a critical problem, since nearly all terminal programs support Xmodem. However, in this day of powerful software packages you would expect something more high-tech!

The software allows for several SIG areas to store the downloads in. When you choose the category you are shown a list of the programs available. The name you are shown is *exactly* what was entered by the uploader. This was a good idea because many systems do not use the same filespec names that Atari uses. Atari limits it's names to 12 characters, while others like Apple allow more. Also, some systems use the space character, or other characters. It is important to preserve the correct file names because some programs were written to look for other files, and the names must be exact. However, this creates a headache for the SysOp. The file names are changed when they are uploaded, and the sysop must constantly refer to his data files to find the filename of the program if he wants to delete or transfer it. I personally do not care to have file names messed with in this manner, which is a common feature of Forum ST.

Another feature of the Nite Lite BBS is the ability to store a number of download request into a file, sort of like batch downloading. However, you must keep track of the file names and set up your own terminal program after each files is received. This makes it very handy if you know how to use Flash's DO commands, or some other macro. But it's a real headache for those who do not. The reason for this feature is the author plans to incorporate his own version of a batch download protocol, which will allow for background downloading. But so far, there is no indication when this feature will be implemented into the program.

The message base features are also very poor compared to other ST BBS programs. It works much like Express, but only allows messages up to 2k long. This is not a problem with most messages, but can become inconvenient. There is no message thread commands, other than a "WHAT?" command that will read the previous message in a string. For Forum or BBST users, this will be a sadly missed feature. One other problem I have had is disappearing messages. It appears that the program keeps the message index in memory and must be saved periodically onto disk. If the BBS were to crash before you saved the message index you could lose messages.

How user friendly is Nite Lite? That depends on the sysop. The Nite Lite BBS has a built-in interpreter language that allows the sysop to create his own custom menus, games, utilities, surveys, or anything else he can think of. Many of the nice "touches" were added such as a hot-key feature. You can make a choice, and the menu will abort, and begin showing whatever you chose. This saves the user some on-line time by not having to constantly read long menu pages to the end.

Scanner Wars
ST-Pictascan vs. IMG Scan

by LeRoy Valley (TAG)

	ST-Pictascan	IMG Scan
Price:	$149.95	$99.95
	E. Arthur Brown	Seymor-Radix
	(612) 762-8847	(214) 255-7490
Software:	v1.0	v1.82

Scanners have been around in the computing world for some time. These slick little devices are used to digitize a picture, and then transfer that information to your computer. Once in the computer, you can use the scanned image in your favorite desktop publisher, or in any graphics program!

Why a scanner instead of a video digitizer? You get better resolution (up to 1000 dpi!), and the investment (and equipment required) is considerably less. All that is required for either of the scanners mentioned above is a 520 ST, a printer, and the scanner itself!

There are currently two low-cost scanners for the ST, and I've had the opportunity to play with them for the past month. I've had a lot of fun, and spent a LOT of time scanning, and have become very familiar with both units. I'll compare them in four separate areas (Hardware, Software, Documentation, and actual scan ability) and then sum it all up at the end. (No fair peeking!)

Hardware

The ST-Pictascan unit looks very professional as you pull it from its wrapping. It is enclosed in a black metal housing, and looks very sturdy. The entire unit mounts on your print head, and E. Arthur Brown provides you with several types of brackets designed to handle just about any style of printer. In most cases you'll probably have to remove your ribbon to attach ST-Pictascan.

Unfortunately, a Star NX-1000 printer isn't "just about any style of printer," so I had to design my own bracket. The actual scanning head must rest against the paper on the platen. Given this criteria, and the shape of the ST-Pictascan unit, I have to keep my paper bailer in the up position while I'm scanning. If you're not careful and ST-Pictascan goes too far over (and slips off the end of the paper), it'll catch the paper on the return trip!

Once mounted, ST-Pictascan connects to your ST via the joystick port leaving the cartridge port free for other goodies. The only thing left to do before scanning is to adjust the scanner's sensitivity. (So it knows what's light and dark.) This is done by turning a small potentiometer located at the rear of the unit. To get through the small hole in the case to the potentiometer requires a jewelers screwdriver. (I really think that they should include a small tool for this.)

ST-Pictascan also has another potentiometer which is for adjusting their stipple effect. The manual doesn't explain what this "stipple effect" is, but according to Eben Brown, it is used to determine the amount of shading ST-Pictascan will apply to the image being scanned.

The IMG Scan unit, on the other hand, looks very simple. It consists of a small cartridge (I can't use other cartridges ...sigh) and two fiber optic cables which attach to the cartridge. Mounting IMG Scan consists of taping (Yes, I'm serious - taping!) one end of the fiber optic cables to your print head, making sure that the ends are within 1/16" of the paper. There is no need to remove your printer ribbon, and your paper bail can stay down. Since IMG Scan doesn't actually touch the paper, there's no danger of it catching the paper. There are no adjustments to make on the IMG Scan scanner.

Software

Booting up the ST-Pictascan software. we are greeted with the screen shown in Figure 1. The first line, Lines to Scan, is the number of vertical lines we want to scan. If the printer were set set up with 1/72" line feeds, then a 72 here would scan 1" of our image. Samples per line determines how much of the image we want to scan horizontally. ST-Pictascan always scans at maximum resolution. The actual number of samples taken during one horizontal pass is dependant on the speed of your printer. A 160 cps printer will scan at 412 dpi -- a 100 cps printer will scan at 660 dpi! If your printer collects 4000 samples per 8" of travel, then setting this parameter to 2000 would scan only half of the page (4"). Since scanning is a slow process,

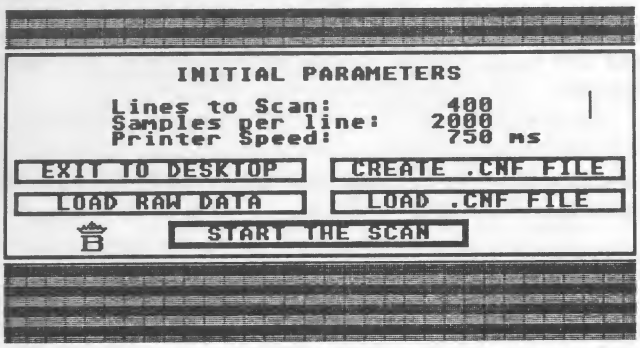

Figure One

you don't want to scan any more than you have to. Printer Speed is the amount of time that the printer takes to move to the right side of the image. This setting is very critical, because if it's not set high enough, then the printer and the software get out of sync with each other, and the result is a VERY distorted image.

The first selection we would make (prior to scanning) is CREATE .CNF FILE. Clicking on this box gives us another GEM dialog box in which we can set up the printer, and then save these settings for future use. E. Arthur Brown supplies you with several different .CNF files for Epson compatible printers. Once the printer is set up, simply select START THE SCAN, and you're in business! While the unit is scanning, you'll see a representation of what it's scanning on the screen. If you need to adjust the unit during the scan, simply press "p" during a right move, and the scanner will pause. Since the software provides you with no means of adjusting things like sensitivity or shading, you've got to manually adjust the scanner via the potentiometers. A dialog box lets you continue the scan at this point or abort.

When the scanner is done, you'll be presented with another dialog box (see Figure 2). At this point the software allows you to manipulate the RAW image, and this is where ST-Pictascan really shines! SET AREA allows you to define an area in which to redraw the entire image! Using this you can stretch, squash, and distort the image to your heart's content. By enclosing an area with a GEM rubberband box you can magnify it as much as you

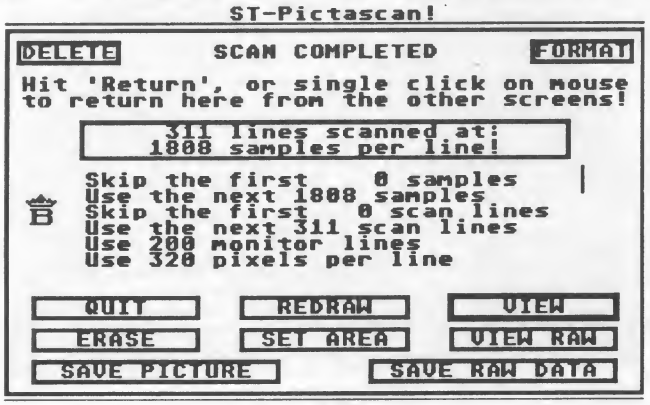

Figure Two

want -- after it's already scanned! The ability to define the area of the scan to save is a real benefit.

VIEW allows you to look at the screen defined with the SET AREA command, while VIEW RAW allows you to look at the original scanned image. Several other options which can be set from this dialog box include Skip the first xx samples (to cut off data from the left side of the scan), Use the next xx samples (to define the width of the scanned image to use), Skip the first xx scan lines (to cut off data from the top of the image), and Use the next xx scan lines (to define how much of the scanned image to use). After you're done playing with the image, you can either save it as a standard Degas picture or as raw data. The raw data can be used by the software in all three resolutions. Saving it as raw data allows you to manipulate it at a later date. Files saved in their raw state can be as large as 650K, and can only be used with the ST-Pictascan software.

Booting up the IMG Scan software, we get the screen shown in Figure 3. The small box under the ruler to the left of the ENLARGE/REDUCE buttons is used to determine what portion of the picture to scan. The box can be dragged back and forth with the mouse, thus allowing you to center a picture, or scan a specific portion of it. Clicking on different buttons in the ENLARGE/REDUCE scale will cause this box to get smaller and larger, depicting the magnification at which to scan.

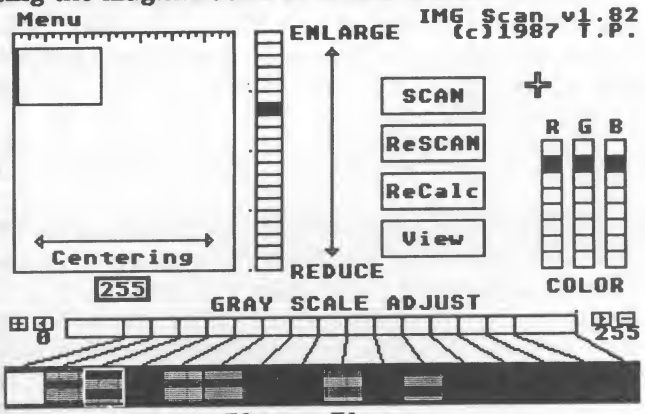

Figure Three

Selecting Menu will give us the drop-down menu shown in Figure 4. To set up the scanner all we have to do is adjust the image in the printer so that the scanner cable will pass over an area that has a good average of black and white and then select Auto Gray Adj.. The print head will feed across the image once and the software will calculate the gray scale automatically! Looking at the bottom of the screen, you'll see the gray scale adjust slider. At any point during the scan you can pause the scanner and adjust the gray scale! By clicking on the small arrows at either end of the slider you can make the image lighter or darker. Clicking on the + or - will either expand or compress the gray scale.

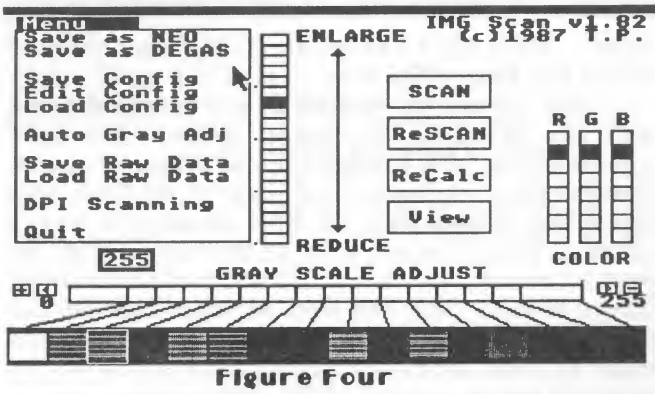

Figure Four

You can even individually adjust ONE shade on the gray scale simply by clicking on the line for that shade in the slider and dragging it where you want! After you've got it set the way you want, just click on Recalc, and IMG Scan will recalculate what you've already scanned, and adjusting it to the new settings! This type of control is fantastic, and very, VERY easy to use!

SCAN simply starts the scanning process (or continues it), while RESCAN clears what you've already scanned and starts over. Using SCAN, you can scan different parts of your image at different magnifications, and have them all appear on the same screen! VIEW allows you to look at the image that's been scanned. Moving back to the menu, we can save our picture as either Neo-Chrome or Degas format (at whatever resolution you're currently in), or as a Raw data file. Once again, the raw data file can be loaded and used in any resolution, and you can manipulate the image via the gray scale slider.

The Save Config, Edit Config, and Load Config options all pertain to setting up your printer. If you've got an Epson compatible printer, you won't even need to use these. If you don't, Seymor Radix provides you with 8 others (including Citizen, Gemini 10X, and Seikosha) and the ability to create your own configuration. Once you've set up your printer, you can save the configuration and never worry about it again.

DPI Scanning is the option that really makes the IMG Scanner an incredible performer. This lets you scan your image at 75, 150, 216, 300, 360, or 1000dpi! And best of all, the image is saved as a standard .IMG file!! This means that any program that supports .IMG files (like Easy Draw, Publishing Partner Professional, or Word Up) can print out these images at the maximum resolution of the printing device! Using it is as simple as selecting DPI Scanning, then scanning as you normally would. Pictures scanned at 300 dpi look incredible, and print just as incredibly!

The last option on the DPI Scanning menu, More Options, presents you with a menu containing standard disk operations such as formatting disks and deleting and renaming files. But what are those over there on the right hand side? RGB sliders? Yes, IMG Scan also allows you to scan images in color! Simply click on the shade, then set the RGB sliders to the desired color. It's that simple!

Seymor Radix offers FREE software updates to all IMG Scan owners. Simply send in a disk and a stamped and self addressed envelope for the latest update! (Or look on GEnie.)

Documentation

Both manuals are about equal in the information provided (about 30 pages). They both guide the user through a tutorial, and then give you a reference section with a short description for each feature (well, almost). E. Arthur Brown never mentions exactly what it is that the Stipple effect does, and Seymor Radix doesn't explain how to use the DPI Scanning option very well (to be fair, though, the DPI Scanning option is very new, and I did push to get the new version of software in time for this review). Seymor Radix even provides you with a picture of King Tut to practice on!

Scanning

The IMG Scan unit consistently provided me with better scans than the ST-Pictascan. Figure 5 was scanned using the IMG Scanner after I had only played with it for 15 minutes! Figure 6 was scanned by Eben Brown himself. I couldn't get results that were as good as his using my ST-Pictascan (and I used it for two straight weeks, and had discussions with Mr. Brown on three separate occasions!), and I really wanted to show you the best possible pictures from both units.

Of course, the real test of a scanner is how well the picture prints out, not how well it looks on the screen. When using IMG Scan in normal scan mode, the printouts look about the same as those from ST-Pictascan. But when IMG Scan is used in DPI mode, there is no comparison. IMG Scan brings out far more details and shades than ST-Pictascan. Using an HP Deskjet printer (not mine, a friend's...sigh), the difference becomes very obvious.

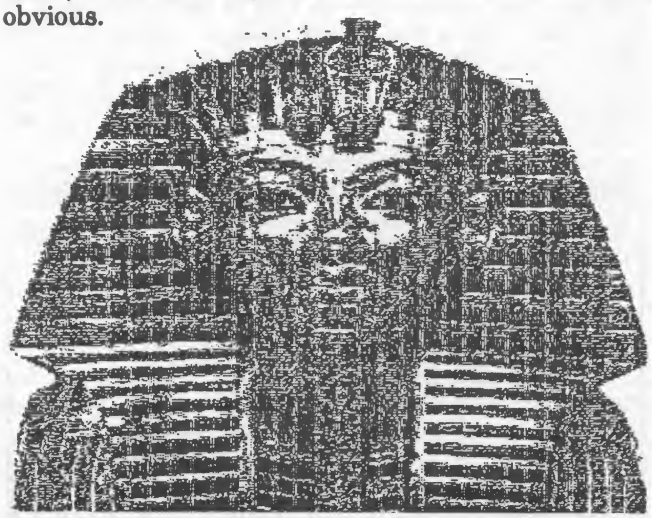

Figure Five

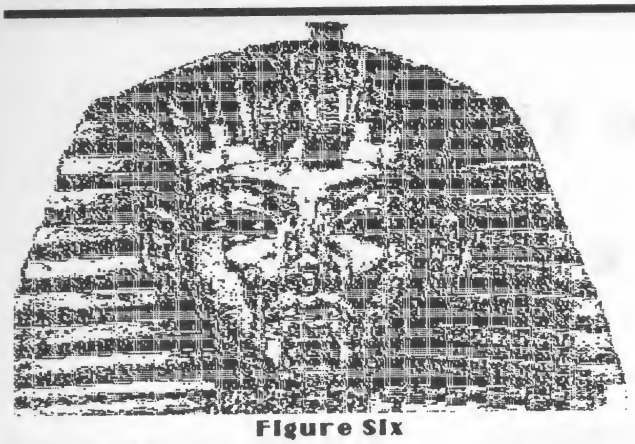

Figure Six

Summary

Hardware-wise, the ST-Pictascan looks more impressive. However, I've heard it said that you can't judge a book by it's cover. and this saying applies very well in this case. The design of the ST-Pictascan makes it cumbersome to attach to your printer, and I don't like the sound of my printer when the scanning unit catches on the paper during a return trip. (I know it's my fault for not setting up my right and left moves every time, but it IS going to happen sooner or later if you use different size images.) In contrast, IMG Scan could not be easier to attach to your print head, and there's no danger of catching on the paper. The earlier models of IMG Scan didn't even have a nice case for the cartridge. You simply plugged a bare board into your cartridge port! Seymor Radix has rectified that, and for only $9.95 you can get a case and the latest software.

In the software department, IMG Scan again gets the nod. Their software is completely GEM based and all adjustments to the scanner or the scanned imaged can be made with a simple click of the mouse! Features like Auto Gray Scale adjust, and the ability to add color to a scanned image are fantastic. And, with the ability to scan an image in standard GEM .IMG format, you've got the perfect tool for creating stunning clip art! Best of all, if I change the sensitivity of the IMG Scanner, I can change what I've already scanned! With ST-Pictascan, once I've found the proper sensitivity and stipple adjustment, I've got to rescan the image! On the plus side, ST-Pictascan does have superb manipulative powers over the image after the scan. This is the only feature sorely lacking in the IMG Scan software. Seymor Radix informs me that a future release of their software will give users the ability to manipulate the scanned image (similar to ST-Pictascan).

The real clincher however, is the fact that I consistently got better scans with IMG Scan than with ST-Pictascan. Couple this fact with price of the two units ($99.95 for IMG Scan vs. $149.95 for ST-Pictascan) and your choice becomes obvious.

Well, that's it for this month. I'd really like to hear some comments on my articles. You can E-Mail me at L.VALLEY on GEnie. Let me know what you'd like to see in the coming months!

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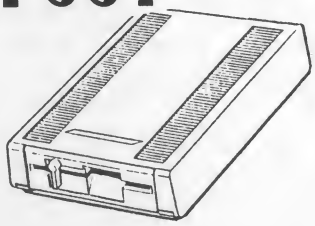
Impressions of the XF551

8Bit Atari Drive



by Brent Fisher (CACE)

All right everyone, hold on to your hats. I'm finally going to do it. That's right I'm going to write a review. Down to business, my review will cover the new disk drive from Atari for the 8bit, the XF551. I'll start with the good points and then go to the bad ones.

First off, the drive matches the XE line to a tee. Cosmetically, it couldn't look any better and still be a disk drive. This drive is truly double-sided and also double-density. All this means is you can store four times as much information as you can with a normal single-sided single-density disk such as you would if you formatted a disk with option P from the DOS 2.5 menu.

One extremely nice feature is this disk drive is quiet. Those of you who own an 810 or a 1050 will wonder if the drive is working or not if you have the volume turned down on your monitor or tv set. This drive is also reliable, I used it to run demonstrations at the mall all weekend and never once did it give me any trouble.

For those of you who like to know what's inside, all I can say is not much. Compared with the 1050 or 810, this drive is very clean. In fact there are only two plugs that connect the drive mechanism to the guts. I have heard you can take a standard three and a half-inch drive mechanism and hook it to the guts, and you'll have a nice three and a half inch disk drive.

All right, these are the things I don't like so far. First, Atari didn't put a power indicator light on the front of the disk drive, in fact there isn't one on it at all. The only way that you can tell if it's on or not is to go around the back of the drive and see which way the power switch is indicating. [Editors' Note: see the following hardware modification article on putting a LED indicator on your XF551!] Which brings up the next bad point. Atari stuck the power switch in the back of the drive. Of course, this isn't so bad for those of you who are used to reaching around to find the power switch but for those of us who haven't, it does take getting used to.

Time to disspell all those nasty rumors about incompatibility with software. First, let me say I couldn't get the drive to work with any legitimate copy of Flight Simulator II, though I suspect this arises from the software protection scheme subLOGIC used. But for those of you who are worrying the Print Shop won't work, don't give it a second thought. This drive will read the back side of the disk perfectly fine, it just won't write to it, that is unless you first put a notch in the side like so many of you have done in the past so you could use the back side of your disk in your 1050s.

Another thing, this drive will not format the back side of the disk as you would normally expect it to as the 1050 does once you punch the write protect hole out.

To format the back side of your disk, you need to punch a hole exactly opposite of it on the left side on both sides of the disk jacket. Now before you all get up in arms about this being a worthless drive since you have to do all this work on a double-side drive, the above is just for those of you who want to use this drive like a 1050.

To get the full potential out of this drive you need use either SpartaDOS or MyDOS, both of which handle the drive as it was meant to be in true double-sided fashion.

I have had no problems writing to disks I already punched the write protect hole out of. But as mentioned above, don't try a format until you stick in a second timing hole.

This drive has a lot of potential which I hope software vendors will sit up and take advantage of.

The only other things about this drive that bugs me are not the fault of the drive but rather Atari itself. So far Atari hasn't released their long awaited replacement for DOS 2.5, A-DOS, but in the meantime you can still use the drive if you use SpartaDOS or MyDOS.

If you are confused enough yet, you can give me a call at 764-4599 and I'll try to explain it better or just come to the meeting September 11 and I'll give a demonstration there.

One final thing. If you are looking for another disk drive or even your first disk drive, this is the drive to go to.

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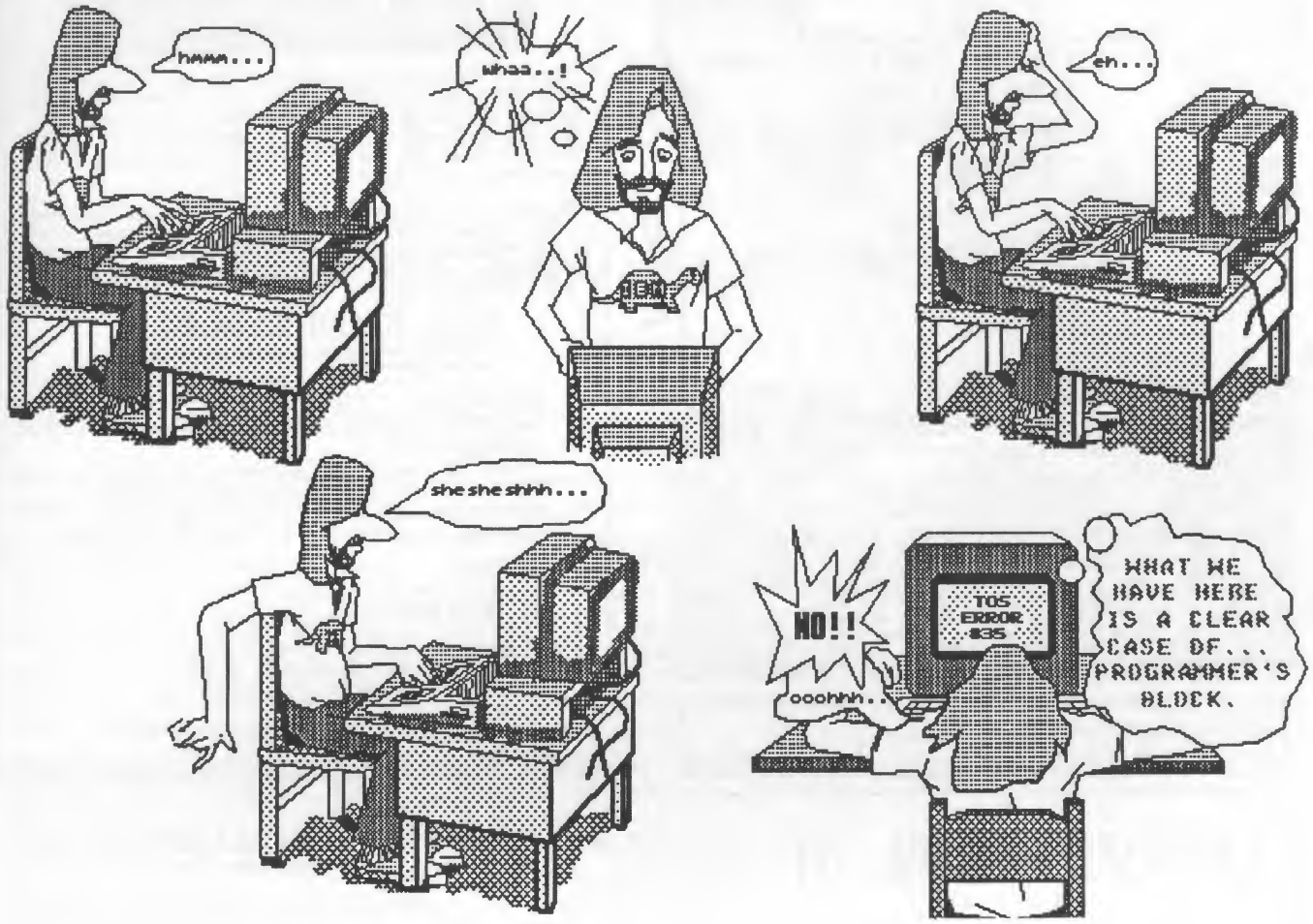

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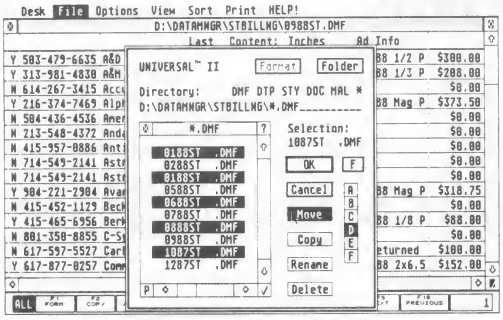

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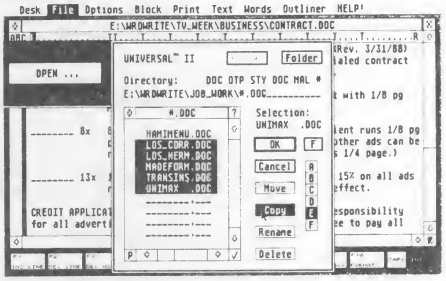

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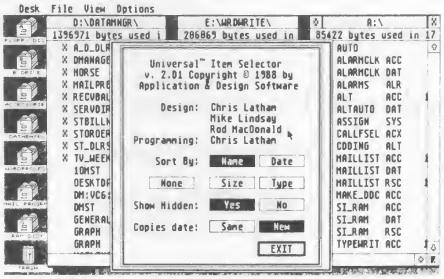

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XF551 Disk Drive

Power LED Modification

by David Bryant (GKAUG)

Several Atari users have already seen the new XF551 disk drive. and enjoy the double density, double sided features. It seems that one feature was left out. The new XF551 does not have a Power LED to let you know the drive is on. If your drive reacts like mine, the disk access LED lights when you turn the drive on and off. This project will resolve that oversight by installing a power LED in the front panel, below the disk access led.

Warning: this modification requires that you remove the covers and modify the front panel, so it will void any warranty from Atari Corporation.

Parts Needed

1 - RED LED, Radio Shack #276-018.
1 - 100 OHM RESISTOR, RS #271-1311.
1 - LED Holders, RS #276-079.
2 - 14 inches, 24 Gage Wire.

Instructions

1: Turn the drive over and remove the four phillips screws that secure the top. Now remove the top.

2: Locate the power cable (it has four wires and is keyed) that plugs into the rear of the drive, and unplug it.

3: Also locate the data ribbon cable (it is also keyed) and unplug it.

4: Use a pencil and draw a line on the bottom case below the disk access led.

5: Remove the phillips screws holding the disk drive mounting brackets to the bottom case; lift the drive assembly from the bottom case and set it aside.

6: Use care and drill a 1/4" hole in the vertical edge, of the bottom case, where you drew the line in step #4. (See diagram #1)

7: Insert one Led Holder in the hole.

8: Locate the jumper wire marked "V" on the front edge of the interface printed circuit board. (See diagram #2) Solder one of the 14 inch wires to it. Solder the other end of this wire to the ANODE end (long leg) of the LED.

9: Locate the jumper wire marked "G" on the front edge of the interface printed circuit board and solder one leg of the resistor to it (See diagram #2). Solder one of the 14 inch wires to the other leg of the resistor. Press the resistor flat against the PCB. Solder the other end of this wire to the CATHODE end (short leg) of the LED.

10: Insert the LED into the led holder and press the legs flat against the bottom case. Route the wires along the left edge, between the drive supports.

11: Plug in the power cable to the back of the disk drive and turn on the power switch. The power led should light. If not, then check your wiring or the polarity of the led.

12: If all works well, then remove power and re-attach the Drive to the bottom case. Attach the two cables removed in steps #2 and #3. Now install the top case to the bottom case.

13: Apply power and check again for proper operation.

David Bryant is a devoted Atari 8bit user, GKAUG's treasurer, and may be contacted at the club's BBS (616-657-2665).

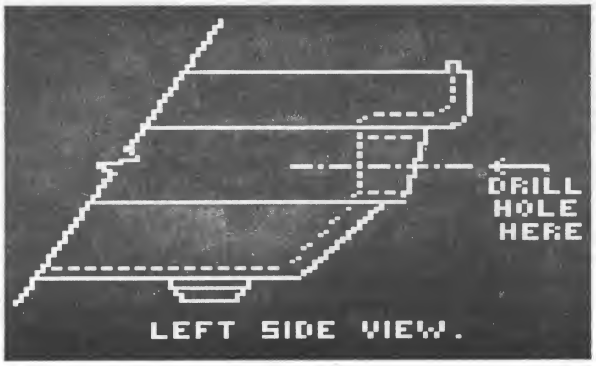

Figure One

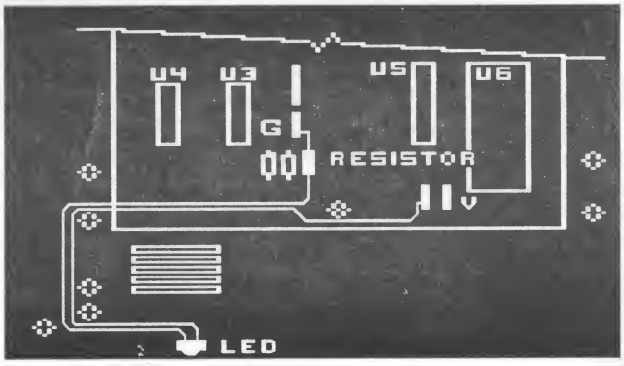

Figure Two

Hey, I've Been on Vacation!

(So, What Do You Expect?)

by Gordon Totty (MACE)

Maybe a better title would have been, "How I Spent My Summer Vacation," but I think you get the point either way. If not, the point is you might want to skip this one and read something better, like "How to Connect Your Microwave Oven to Your MIDI Port." Come to think of it, that article is probably being held for the very special Christmas issue.

First, some personal notes.

"GOTCHA!!"

That's my only apology to those of you who were taken in by my Letter to the Editor and my own reply on the subject of the Strop Piker or Strap Puker review. Gosh folks, I never dreamed anyone would believe the stupid letter was anything other than a gag! Then, believing you would figure the letter for a joke, I thought surely you would conclude that the answer to it was also just humor.

OK, ok, I will apologize. To Bill and Pattie, our beloved editors, I beg your pardon. I especially feel bad that there are a few people who could believe that either of you could be capable of really being sarcastic to a reader. So, let me introduce us to those who don't know us yet. I'm the snide, mean little twerp. Bill and Pattie are kind and nice or kind of nice, or something like that. To the readers, I am sorry if I did not make the humor more obvious. I let you down, and if you can't forgive me then read no further. I don't deserve you.

I must admit, however, that I never had so much fun writing a piece as that bogus Letter to the Editor, and its response. Apologies aside, I confess that I am still giggling over it (the piece, not the reaction).

Let's get serious. While on vacation, I noticed a very bad bit of news in The Wall Street Journal. In case you haven't heard, Atari is claiming it was cheated in the Federated store purchase, and has filed a lawsuit for damages in the amount of $43 million. Considering that Atari paid $67.3 million for the stores, the suit in effect requests that about two-thirds of the purchase price be refunded.

Why? Alleged fraud, consisting of providing Atari with financial statements and reports overstating the value of Federated. Atari charges the defendants knew that the statements were not accurate. Atari is seeking triple damages under the Federal Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act. I'll bet that got the defendants' attention! Collecting the treble damages, a mere $129 million, requires proof of a "pattern of racketeering."

I know very little about this case, but my "man in the street" opinion is they will have a very hard time proving a pattern of racketeering on the part of Federated's former CEO, auditors, and investment banker. So, let's not count on Atari getting the full amount and investing it in better products, better US distribution, more software support, etc.

It seems Federated is doing so poorly it is dragging Atari's earnings down (59 percent below year ago for the first half of '88). This, in turn, my fellow investors, may account for the fairly recent drop in the price of Atari stock by about 20 percent to 25 percent.

Now, for some more bad news on a new subject. We have all heard how well Atari is doing overseas. So I ask you, what is the largest selling home computer in Germany? According to COMPUTE!, it is the Commodore. Damn things are like cockroaches, aren't they? You just cannot wipe them out. Do you think we should have bought one? Naaahh! You know, one of these decades they are going to stop bringing out new software for it. Besides, the disk drive is too slow.

Back to my vacation, up in New England I read about the Computer Museum in Boston. I wish I could tell you all about my visit to it, but I did not get near it. Actually, the article I saw in the Boston Globe was about (sweet?) Adeline Naiman, who was just appointed education director of the museum. In speaking of the computer revolution, she said nothing except the automobile has made such a qualitative difference in the lives of people. (One amazing example is discussed below.) What do you think? Your thousand word essay is due to MAM next month. Please get started now.

Ms. Naiman has a lot of ideas for helping the museum bridge the gap between the techies

(you) and the lay public (me). If only half of her ideas get implemented the Boston Computer Museum should be an exciting place to visit.

Come to think of it, it probably already is an exciting place to visit. It is the only museum exclusively devoted to computers. It gets 100,000 visitors each year, so it would not likely be crowded on any particular day. They come to see hardware, software, historical computers and robots -- a collection of 1,350 artifacts, 1,000 photographs, 200 videotapes, and 40 films. Mind you, I have not been there and cannot speculate how much of this is on display at any time. Many museums are like icebergs; there is more to them than you can see.

If you get up that way, stop by. It will cost you $4.50 per adult, according to the flyer I picked up from a travel rack. If you have already been there, why not write up a description for MAM? (Don't you like the title of our journal? Reminds me of a polite youngster addressing a mature lady.)

Moving on to another subject and another computer, how many of you became charter subscribers to PC/Computing? Because of the brand of computer I use at the office (Brand X if you must know), I have tried several of the magazines that cater to the computers that use PC-DOS or MS-DOS. I am not going to name the ones I did not like, but I want to relate that while on vacation, I read the first issue of PC/Computing from cover to cover. If you are interested in this kind of magazine, in addition to MAM and three or four Atari related magazines, I urge you to try PC/Computing.

I rate it "fantastic" on a scale from "Save it for the out-house" to "Not tonight, honey; I'm going to read a magazine!" ("Fantastic" is just below the top of the scale. I don't give the top rating to many publications.) It is published by Ziff-Davis Publishing Company. I mention that so you can be sure to pick up the right magazine. Many of these magazines have very similar titles, owing to the limited number of ways you can say "PC."

Back to the subject of Atari magazines for a moment, do you notice, as I do, that there seem to be more Atari magazines, relatively, than Atari computers? Are we better at buying magazines than other computer owners? There are far more Apple computers in use than Atari, yet I think there are twice as many Atari magazines as Apple. Or, does it just seem that way as I go broke buying magazines at about $4 each? Fortunately, I save money by not buying any more Apple magazines. I did buy one, just once. Didn't like it.

PC/Computing has a $2.95 cover price but 12 monthly issues can be yours for $12.95 a year, including a free disk of utilities for 'ol blue. The first issue was 272 pages, not uncommon in the PC magazine field. See how important advertisers are to keeping the price of the magazine down?

So far, PC/Computing has cost me double the subscription price, as an article in it caused me to go out and buy a book. The article is about Stephen Hawking, a 46-year-old British physicist who is a genius. Mr. Hawking has had Lou Gehrig's disease for about 25 years and has been confined to a wheelchair for the past twenty years. Several years ago, he lost his voice after catching pneumonia. After that, his wheelchair was equipped with a special computer and voice synthesizer to permit him to "talk." One of his ambitions is to show that disabled people can achieve success with the right help and equipment.

Hawking's publisher (Bantam Books) points out he was born on the anniversary of Galileo's death. (What would Shirley MacLaine make of that?) He holds Newton's chair as Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University. His publisher claims he "is widely regarded as the most brilliant theoretical physicist since Einstein." Hawking calls this "media hype. I'm a bit smarter than most, but not exceptional." (Newton's chair at Cambridge! Sure, MAM, the kid's a little brighter than average...but he's no Einstein!)

The book is titled "A Brief History of Time, From the Big Bang to Black Holes." The last time I looked, it was on the New York Times' best seller list. I have not read it yet, but understand that it includes only one equation. In it you will learn that black holes have no hair. (Don't ask me; I haven't figured that out yet.) With careful reading, I hope to profit from this book, but I did not buy it soley for that reason. I am sure Stephen Hawking would not like to read this, but I bought the book because the PC/Computing interview put a lump in my throat. I had to buy the book, to read what it is that this man works so hard to communicate. My emotion is not pity. It is awe. Awe of the technology and the man.

The PC/Computing article was written by Charles Fox, also confined to a wheelchair. Even if this magazine is not for you, try to look it up at the library and read the piece about Hawking. It was written for people interested in computers, and describes an amazing computer application.

The only other news I have from my summer vacation has to do with my "hacking" as a writer. Immodesty forces me to reveal to you that, if all goes well, you should soon be able to read some of my stuff in ST X-PRESS. They have NOT gone out of business, but, like Analog have been off the market for a few months and expect to return "bigger and better." Perhaps it will have happened by the time you read this. Wish me well, I know I do!

Aw, c'mon. I'm just kidding. My ego is very, very tiny. Almost.

I wonder if ST X-PRESS would have canned me for the Strip Poker prank. One thing that will keep me writing for MAM is that my MAM has forgiven me. Thank you, MAM, my little MAM-my! How corny do you think I can get?

[Editors' Note: Very, Gordon, very!]

Blocking of Long-Distance Telephone Calls

by Jim Schmickley, Hawkeye PC

Summary: This article describes the "blocking" by one long-distance telephone company of access through its system to certain telephone numbers, particularly BBS numbers. The blocking is applied in a very arbitrary manner, and the company arrogantly asserts BBS SysOps and anyone who uses a computer modem are "hackers."

The company doesn't really want to discuss the situation, but it appears the following scenario occurred. The proverbial "person or persons unknown" identified one or more "valid" long-distance account numbers, and subsequently used those numbers on one or more occasions to fraudulently call a legitimate computer bulletin board system (BBS). When the long-distance company discovered the fraudulent charges, they "blocked" the line without bothering to investigate or contacting the BBS SysOp to obtain his assistance. In fact, the company did not even determine the SysOp's name.

The long-distance carrier would like to pretend that the incident which triggered the actions described in this article was an isolated situation, not related to anything else in the world. However, there are major principles of free, uninhibited communications and individual rights deeply interwoven into the issue. And there is still the lingering question, "If one long-distance company is interfering with its customers' communications on little more than a whim, are other long-distant companies also interfering with the American public's right of free 'electronic speech?"

Call to Action

Your inputs and protests are needed to counter the long-distance company's claims that "no one was hurt by their blocking actions because nobody complained." Obviously nobody complained for a long time because the line blocking was carried out in such a manner no one realized, until April 1988, what was being done.

Please read through the rest of this article (yes, it's long, but you should find it very interesting) and judge for yourself. Then, please write to the organizations listed at the end of the article; insist your right to telephone whatever number you choose should not be impaired by the arbitrary decision of some telephone company bureaucrat who really doesn't care about the rights of his customers. Protest in the strongest terms. Remember, the rights you save will be your own!

Setting the Scene

Teleconnect is a long-distance carrier and telephone direct marketing company headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The company is about eight-years-old, and has a long-distance business base of about 200,000 customers. Teleconnect has just completed its first public stock offering, and is presently (August 1988) involved in a merger which will make it the nation's fourth-largest long-distance carrier. It is a very rapidly-growing company, having achieved its spectacular growth by offering long-distance service at rates advertised as being 15 percent to 30 percent below AT&T's rates.

When Teleconnect started out in the telephone interconnection business, few, if any, exchanges were set up for "equal access", so it set up a network of local access numbers (essentially just unlisted local PABXs - private automatic branch exchanges) and assigned a six-digit account number to each customer. Later, a seventh "security" digit was added to all account numbers. (I know what you're thinking - what could be easier for a war-games dialer than to seek out "valid" seven-digit numbers?) Teleconnect now offers direct "equal access" dialing on most exchanges. But, the older access number/account code system is still in place for those exchanges which do not offer "equal access." And, that system is still very useful for customers who place calls from their offices or other locations away from home.

In April 1988, a friend mentioned that Teleconnect was "blocking" certain telephone lines where they detected computer tone. In particular, he had been unable to call Curt Kyhl's Stock Exchange BBS in Waterloo, Iowa.This sounded like something I should certainly look into, so I tried to call Curt's BBS. Teleconnect would not allow my call to go through. Instead, I got a recorded voice message stating the call was a local call from my location. A second attempt got the same message. At least they were consistent.

I called my Teleconnect service representative and asked just what the problem was. After I explained what happened, she suggested that it must be a local call. I explained I really didn't think a 70-mile call from Cedar Rapids to Waterloo was a local call. She checked on the situation and informed me the line was being "blocked." I asked why, and she "supposed it was at the customer's request." After being advised that statement made no sense, she admitted she really didn't know why. So, on to her supervisor. The first-level supervisor verified the line was being "blocked by Teleconnect security," but she couldn't or wouldn't say why. Then she challenged, "Why do you want to call that number?" That was the wrong question to ask this unhappy customer, and the lady quickly discovered that was none of her business. On to her supervisor.

The second-level supervisor refused to reveal any information of value to a mere customer, but she did suggest any line Teleconnect was blocking could still be reached through AT&T or Northwestern Bell by dialing 10288-1. When questioned why Teleconnect, which for years had sold its service on the basis of a cost-savings over AT&T rates, was now suggesting that customers use AT&T, the lady had no answer.

I was then informed that, if I needed more information, I should

contact Dan Rogers, Teleconnect's Vice President for Customer Service. That sounded good; "Please connect me."

"I'm sorry, but Mr. Rogers is out of town, and won't be back until next week."

"Next week?"

"But he does call in regularly. Maybe he could call you back before that."

Mr. Rogers did call me back, later that day, from Washington, D.C. where he and some Teleconnect "security people" were attending a conference on telephone security. Dan Rogers prefaced his conversation with, "I'm just the mouthpiece; I don't understand all the technical details. But, our security people are blocking that number because we've had some problems with it in the past." I protested the allegation of "problems" didn't make sense because the number was for a computer bulletin board system operated by a reputable businessman, Curt Kyhl.

Mr. Rogers said I had just given Teleconnect new information; they had not been able to determine whose number they were blocking. "Our people are good, but they're not that good. Northwestern Bell won't release subscriber information to us." And, when he got back to his office the following Monday, he would have the security people check to see if the block could be removed.

The following Monday, another woman from Teleconnect called to inform me they had checked the line, and they were removing the block from it. She added the comment this was the first time in four years that anyone had requested a line be unblocked. I suggested that it probably wouldn't be the last time.

In a later telephone conversation, Dan Rogers verified the block had been removed from Curt Kyhl's line, but warned the line would be blocked again "if there were any more problems with it." A brief, nonconclusive discussion of Teleconnect's right to take such action then ensued. I added the fact that Teleconnect "security" had been unable to determine the identity of the SysOp of the blocked board just didn't make sense; it didn't sound as if the "security people" were very competent. Mr. Rogers then admitted every time the security people tried to call the number, they got a busy signal (and, although Mr. Rogers didn't admit it, they just "gave up," and arbitrarily blocked the line.) Oh, yes, the voice message, "This is a local call..." was not intended to deceive anyone according to Dan Rogers. It was just Teleconnect could only put so many messages on their equipment, and that was the one they selected for blocked lines.

Beginning the Paper Trail

Obviously, Teleconnect was not going to pay much attention to telephone calls from mere customers. On April 22, Ben Blackstock, practicing attorney and veteran SysOp, wrote to Mr. Rogers urging Teleconnect permit their customers to call whatever numbers they desired. Ben questioned Teleconnect's authority to block calls, and suggested such action had serious overlays of "big brother." He also noted "you cannot punish the innocent to get at someone who is apparently causing Teleconnect difficulty."

Casey D. Mahon, Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Teleconnect, replied to Ben Blackstock's letter on April 28th. This response was the start of Teleconnect's seemingly endless stream of vague, general allegations regarding "hackers" and "computer billboards." Teleconnect insisted they did have authority to block access to telephone lines, and cited 18 USC 2511(2)(a)(i) as an example of the authority. The Teleconnect position was summed up in the letter:

"Finally, please be advised the company is willing to 'unblock' the line in order to ascertain whether or not illegal hacking has ceased. In the event, however, theft of Teleconnect long distance services through use of the bulletin board resumes, we will certainly block access through the Teleconnect network again and use our authority under federal law to ascertain the identity of the hacker or hackers."

Mr. Blackstock checked the cited section of the US Code, and discovered it related to "interception" of communications, but had nothing to do with blocking. He advised me of his opinion, and wrote back to Casey Mahon challenging her interpretation of that section of federal law.

In his letter, Ben noted, "Either Teleconnect is providing a communication service that is not discriminatory, or it is not." He added he would "become upset, to say the least" if he discovered Teleconnect was blocking access to his BBS. Mr. Blackstock concluded by offering to cooperate with Teleconnect in seeking a declaratory judgment regarding their "right" to block a telephone number based upon the actions of some third party. To date, Teleconnect has not responded to that offer.

On May 13th, I sent my own reply to Casey Mahon, and answered the issues of her letter point by point. I noted that even I, not an attorney, knew the difference between interception and blocking, and if Teleconnect didn't, they could check with any football fan. My letter concluded:

"Since Teleconnect's 'blocking' policies are ill-conceived, thoughtlessly arbitrary, anti-consumer, and of questionable legality, they need to be corrected immediately. Please advise me how Teleconnect is revising these policies to ensure that I and all other legitimate subscribers will have uninhibited access to any and all long-distance numbers we choose to call."

Casey Mahon replied on June 3rd. Not unexpectedly, she brushed aside all my arguments. She also presented the first of the sweeping generalizations, with total avoidance of specifics, which we have since come to recognize as a Teleconnect trademark. One paragraph neatly sums Casey Mahon's letter:

"While I appreciate the time and thought that obviously went into your letter, I do not agree with your conclusion that Teleconnect's efforts to prevent theft of its services are in any way inappropriate. The inter-exchange industry has been plagued, throughout its history, by individuals who devote substantial ingenuity to the theft of long distance services. It is not unheard of for a company to lose as much as $500,000 a month to theft. As you can imagine, such losses, over a period of time, could drive a company out of business."

Escalation

By this time, it was very obvious Teleconnect was going to remain recalcitrant until some third party, preferably a regulatory agency, convinced them of the error of their ways. Accordingly, I assembled the file and added a letter of complaint addressed to the Iowa Utilities Board. The complaint simply asked that Teleconnect be directed to institute appropriate safeguards to ensure "innocent third parties" would no longer be adversely af-

fected by Teleconnect's arbitrary "blocking" policies. My letter of complaint was dated July 7th, and the Iowa Utilities Board replied on July 13th. The reply stated Teleconnect was required to respond to my complaint by August 2nd, and the Board would then propose a resolution. If the proposed resolution was not satisfactory, I could request the file be reopened and the complaint be reconsidered. If the results of that action were not satisfactory, a formal hearing could be requested.

After filing the complaint, I also sent a copy of the file to Congressman Tom Tauke. Mr. Tauke represents the Second Congressional District of Iowa, which includes Cedar Rapids, and is also a member of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee. I have subsequently had a personal conversation with Mr. Tauke as well as additional correspondence on the subject. He seems to have a deep and genuine interest in the issue, but at my request, is simply an interested observer at this time. It is our hope that the Iowa Utilities Board will propose an acceptable resolution without additional help.

Teleconnect's response to the Iowa Utilities Board was filed July 29th. As anticipated, it contained vague generalities and unsubstantiated allegations. However, it offered one item of new, and shocking, information; Curt Kyhl's BBS had been blocked for ten months, from June 6, 1987 to mid-April 1988. (At this point it should be noted that Teleconnect's customers had no idea that the company was blocking some of our calls. We just assumed that calls weren't going through because of Teleconnect's technical problems.)

Teleconnect avoided putting any specific, or even relevant, information in their letter. However, they did offer to whisper in the staff's ear; "Teleconnect would be willing to share detailed information regarding this specific case, and hacking in general, with the Board's staff, as it has in the past with various federal and local law enforcement agencies, including the United States Secret Service. Teleconnect respectfully requests, however, that the board agree to keep such information confidential, as to do otherwise would involve public disclosure of ongoing investigations of criminal conduct and the methods by which interexchange carriers, including Teleconnect, detect such theft."

There is no indication of whether anyone felt such a "confidential" meeting would violate Iowa's Open Meetings Law. And, nobody apparently questioned why, during a ten-month-long ongoing investigation, Teleconnect seemed unable to determine the name of the individual whose line they were blocking. Of course, whatever they did was justified because (in their own words), "Teleconnect had suffered substantial dollar losses as a result of the theft of long distance services by means of computer 'hacking' utilizing the computer billboard which is available at that number."

Teleconnect's most vile allegation was, "Many times, the hacker will enter the stolen authorization code on computer billboards, allowing others to steal long distance services by utilizing the code." But no harm was done by the blocking of the BBS number because, "During the ten month period the number was blocked, Teleconnect received no complaints from anyone claiming to be the party to whom the number was assigned." The fact Curt Kyhl had no way of knowing his line was being blocked might have had something to do with the fact that he didn't complain.

It was also pointed out I really had no right to complain since, "First, and foremost, Mr. Schmickley is not the subscriber to the number." That's true; I'm just a long-time Teleconnect customer refused service because of an alleged act performed by an unknown third party.

Then Teleconnect dumped on the Utilities Board staff a copy of a seven page article from Business Week Magazine, entitled "Is Your Computer Secure?" This article was totally unrelated to the theft of long-distance service, except for an excerpt from a sidebar story about a West German hackers' club. The story reported that, "In 1984, Chaos uncovered a security hole in the videotex system the German telephone authority, the Deutsche Bundespost, was building. When the agency ignored club warnings that messages in a customer's private electronic mailbox weren't secure, Chaos members set out to prove the point. They logged on to computers at Hamburger Sparkasse, a savings bank, and programmed them to make thousands of videotex calls to Chaos headquarters one weekend. After two days of this, the bank owed the Bundespost $75,000 in telephone charges."

Resolution with a Rubber Stamp

The staff of the Iowa Utilities Board replied to my complaint by letter on August 19th. They apparently accepted the vague innuendo submitted by Teleconnect without any verification. "Considering the illegal actions reportedly to be taking place on number (319) 236-0834, it appears the blocking was reasonable. However, we believe the Board should be notified shortly after the blocking and permission should be obtained to continue the blocking for any period of time."

However, it was also noted that, "Iowa Code 476.20 (1) (1987) states, 'A utility shall not, except in cases of emergency, discontinue, reduce, or impair service to a community or a part of a community, except for nonpayment of account or violation of rules and regulations, unless and until permission to do so is obtained from the Board." The letter further clarified, "Although the Iowa Code is subject to interpretation, it appears to staff that 'emergency' refers to a relatively short time..."

Since it appeared obvious the Utilities Board staff had not questioned or investigated a single one of Teleconnect's allegations, the staff's response was absolutely astounding. Accordingly, I filed a request for reconsideration on August 22nd.

Three points were raised in the request for reconsideration: (1) The staff's evaluation should have been focused on the denial of service to me and countless others of Teleconnect's 200,000 customers, and not just on the blocking of incoming calls to one BBS. (2) The staff accepted all of Teleconnect's allegations as fact, although not one bit of hard evidence was presented in support of those allegations. (3) In the words of the staff's own citation, it appeared that Teleconnect had violated Iowa Code 476.20 (1) (1987) continuously over a ten months' period, perhaps as long as four years.

Since Teleconnect had dumped a seven-page irrelevant magazine article on the staff, it seemed only fair to now offer a two-page completely relevant story to them. This was "On Your Computer - Bulletin Boards," from the June, 1988 issue of "Changing Times." This excellent article cited nine BBSes as "good places to get started." Among the nine listed BBSes was Curt Kyhl's "Stock Exchange, Waterloo, Iowa (319-236-0834)." Even the geniuses at Teleconnect ought to be able to recognize that this BBS, recommended by a national magazine, is the very same one they blocked for ten months.

You are now up-to-date on the entire story. Now, we are in the process of spreading the word so that all interested people can contact the Iowa authorities so they will get the message that this case is much bigger than the blocking of one BBS. You can help in two ways:

First, upload this file to bulletin boards you call. Let's get this message distributed to BBS and modem users across the nation, because the threat is truly to communications across the nation.

Second, read the notice appended to this article and ACT. The notice was distributed at the last meeting of Hawkeye PC Users' Group. If you are a Teleconnect customer, it is very important you write the agencies listed on the notice. If you are not a Teleconnect customer, but are interested in preserving your rights to uninhibited communications, you can help the cause by writing to those agencies, also.

If you are user of Teleconnect's long distance telephone service,you need to be aware of their "blocking" policy. Teleconnect representatives have indicated other "computer numbers" have been the objects of similar action in the past, and they (Teleconnect) have a "right" to continue such action in the future. Aside from the trampling of individual rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights of the US Constitution, this arbitrary action serves only to "punish the innocent" Teleconnect customers and bulletin board operators, while doing absolutely nothing to identify, punish, or obtain payment from the guilty.

Please write to Teleconnect. Explain how long you have been a customer. that your modem generates a significant amount of the revenue they collect from you, and that you strongly object to their arbitrarily deciding what numbers you may or may not call. Challenge their "right" to institute a "blocking" policy and insist the policy be changed. Send your protests to: Teleconnect Company, att: Mr. Dan Rogers, Vice President for Customer Service, 500 Second Avenue, S.E. Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401.

A complaint filed with the Iowa Utilities Board has been initially resolved in favor of Teleconnect. A request for reconsideration has been filed, and the time is now for letters to the State of Iowa. Please write to: Gerald W. Winter, Supervisor, Consumer Services, Iowa State Utilities Board, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. And to: James Maret, Office of the Consumer Advocate, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319.

[Editors' Note: Jerry Cross is looking into the issue of blocking by phone companies here in Michigan. We eagerly look forward to his article.]

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Contact Pattie -- (313) 973-8825

Telecommunicating Tips

by John Nagy (CHAOS)

A little-know cause of modem problems is reversed polarity at the phone jack. As many of us install our own extensions, we may not observe it *sometimes* can make a difference which wire goes where. An XM301 modem can fail to auto-answer (or operate at all) if the phone wires are reversed, while users of 2400 baud modems may find connection problems or line noise can be relieved by correcting the phone polarity.

Did you know most phone companies will want to sock you for a Business Rate Phone Line if you run a BBS? Even if it is a private and not for profit board, several companies have pressed for, and received, judgements against BBS operators for back charges at the higher commercial rates.

The key to being charged as a business? Advertising the phone number. Yes, if you make the number public or someone else announces your number in a message on another BBS, you can be said to be advertising, and thus, a business user. Beware. I can't believe this happens much, but it happened to Steven Kamradt, SysOp of Merlyn's Rainbow in Florida. I hope the phone companies don't read the back pages of Computer Shopper where hundreds of BBSes are "advertised."

While we are talking about phones, I've been asked if "data quality" lines are really needed for a BBS or a home phone used for modeming. It all depends on your area and what baud rate you expect to use. Some phone companies will pry a bit if you add a second phone line (looking for business rate revenue!). If you say you plan to use it for your computer, they will immediately try to convince you that a special grade line is required... at a premium rate. If you have already used the regular lines in your area at the transfer speed you expect to be using and found them reasonably trouble free, don't even mention "computers" when you order your new line.

It is true that in some areas the lines are always too noisey for reliable data use at any speed, and almost anywhere, the lines are unsuitable for sustained 9600 baud use. Just know what you need before you over-buy. A friend of mine was talked into data-quality line charges... although he uses only a 300 baud modem, and only occasionally. A sad waste.

[Editors' Note: Speaking from our experience, the local or long-distance phone companies did not pressure or suggest getting a data line even though the company's representative was informed the second line was for a computer bulletin board.]

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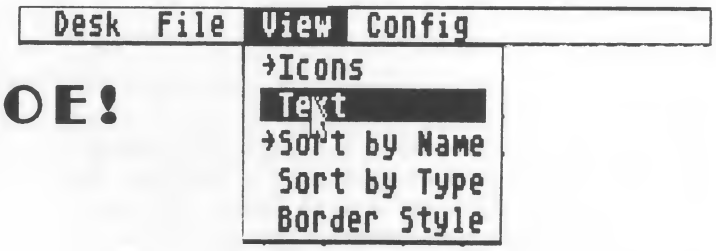
Many people have asked which Mailing List program we use at Best Electronics, we currently use Super Mailer+ from Royal Software. Super Mailer program (D) $39.95

XL to XE Software Compatiablty Mod by Tom Lawless. This two chip/switch mod is for enhanced 800XL computers (256K-512K). $8

Hardware upgrade kits and P.C. boards that require the 41256K ram chips have been put on hold because of the high price of ram chips. We hope to ship again once ram chip prices start to drop down!



Get Up and GOE!

by Bill Rayl

In the 8bit Atari community, one of the hottest topics of discussion centers around the new ST-like graphic operating environments hitting the market. Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with David Sullivan of Total Control Systems, developer of GOE for the 8bit. Dave had just finished a very successful demonstration of the cartridge-based operating system at the Glendale AtariFest. During our conversation, Dave spoke of the past, persent and future plans for the GOE cartridge.

In the Beginning

Dave first began work on GOE, in a roundabout way, back in 1986 when he produced a public domain program called GOS which he donated to his local User Group. After spending about three months working on what was later to become GOE, Dave was approached by a company called Merrill Ward. Merrill Ward asked Dave to convert their Celebrity Cookbook program from the IBM to other machines. For nearly a year and a half, GOE was set aside. Then, in late April/early May of 1988 Total Control Systems and Merrill Ward entered negotiations over the marketing of GOE.

Then things fell apart. For legal reasons, Dave could not comment on why Total Control Systems and Merrill Ward parted company. He did say, "Not only are the statements Mr. Merrill is making saying I missed contracted deadlines false, there never were any contracts signed."

Merrill Ward, reportedly under the new name of USA Media, is focusing attention on the marketing of Reeve Software's Diamond OS. Total Control Systems is going ahead with production of the GOE cartridge. According to Dave, the demo disk Merrill Ward was using for promotion of GOE was actually derived from the 1986 public domain GOS program and didn't do justice to the final product.

For anyone who purchased this demo disk from Merrill Ward for $5, Total Control Systems is willing to credit this $5 toward purchase of the GOE cartridge.

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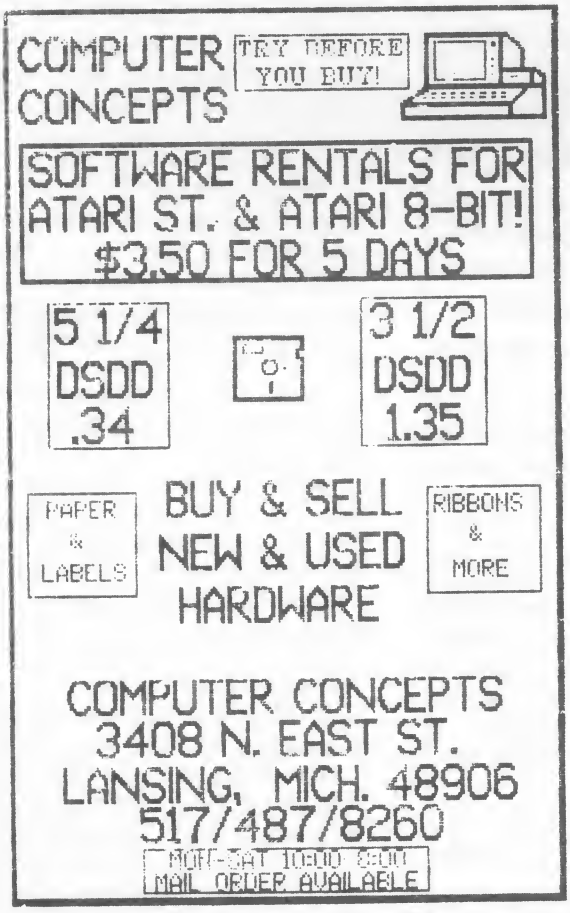
Plug It In and GOE

GOE, which will begin shipping to dealers in late October, is a 64K ICD "piggyback" cartridge allowing users to plug in additional cartridges with ease. Built into the cartridge is the graphic operating system, the desktop, a number of fonts and icons and three desk accessories -- a notepad, calculator and an ST-like Control Panel. The cartridge also comes with information on how to use the graphic interface routines in your programs and source code for the three included accessories. A coupon allowing GOE owners to purchase Total Control System's wordprocessor and paint programs for only $14.95 will also be included in the package for a limited time.

Until the cartridge appears in the stores in late October, GOE can be purchased directly from Total Control Systems for only $50, so you can get the whole package for $65! Dave added that the wordprocessor will support the Atari XEP-80 and multiple fonts while the paint program "is a NeoChrome workalike" that allows 128 colors (!) for creating your masterpieces.



The GOE cartridge itself supports 40, 64 and 80 column displays (with the 64 column support for ease of viewing on TV screens). The operating system has built-in icons, windows, drop-down and pop-up menus which can be rotated anywhere on the desktop and routines for drawing polygons and adding patterns and fills. Within drop-down menus, you can have submenus and scrolling menus. Menus can even be placed inside windows if the programmer chooses.

Total Control Systems will be releasing GOE Develop shortly, a complete "developer's kit" for MAC65 programmers. According to Dave, all the features of GOE are also accessible through ACTION! and even in BASIC. (The GOE cartridge allows direct access to the BASIC built into your 8bit Atari.)

Future GOE Products

By making the graphic interface accessible through the most popular currently used programming languages, GOE will no doubt cause an upsurge in PD and shareware software. Total Control Systems is already working on a terminal program and database using GOE's windowing environment. Dave said preliminary tests have also been done on the feasibility of a GOE Desktop Publishing *cartridge*. The tests have gone well, and Dave is confident they can produce a "miniature Timeworks Publisher" that would not use system memory for the actual program! If Total Control Systems hears of enough enthusiasm for this product, they will begin work on it in earnest. People wishing to voice interest for this product can call Total Control Systems at (619) 270-0111.

Special User Group Purchases

As mentioned earlier, the GOE cartridge will be hitting the dealer shelves in late October. When the cartridge becomes available in stores, Total Control Systems will increase their $50 direct purchase price in order to not "compete unfairly" with the dealers. Dave also pointed out that members of Atari User Groups can take advantage of a special club purchase.

If your club orders between five and nine GOE cartridges direct from Total Control Systems, your group can take 10 percent off the price. Better yet, if your organization purchases 10 or more, you save 20 percent!

For more information, contact Total Control Systems, 4156 Tolowa St., San Diego, CA 92119, (619) 270-0111.

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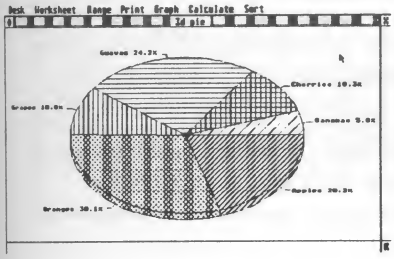

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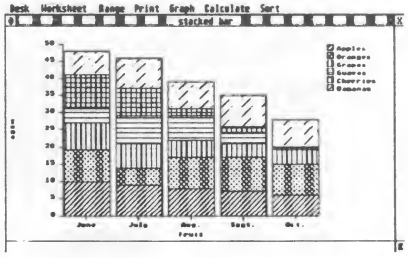

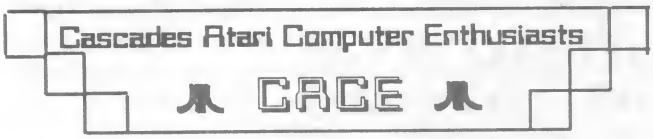

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts, CACE, is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Tim Hotchkiss	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Jim Boyce	522-4074
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $14.20 per year, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail to the PO Box. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE should be sent to: CACE, PO Box 6161, Jackson, MI, 49204.

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1 p.m. to approx. 4 p.m. The meetings take place in the basement of the East Side Lounge at 2214 East Ganson, Jackson, Mi.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

Starting off this month, I'd like to congratulate Tim Hotchkiss for stepping in to fill the shoes of Bob Kingsbury, who is leaving us as Vice-president for other endeavors. I apologize to Jim Boyce about that month's column not including the above information, but it had not as yet been made official. In case you're wondering what I'm typing about, in last month's column Jim said to read more about Tim in my column. I'd also like to say thanks to Bob for all the work that he has one for the club and to say that we'll miss him.

One thing that has been getting in my craw lately is the pounding Analog has received from Antic lately, I don't think that Antic has a right to say a thing especially since they have been doing such a poor job on coverage of the 8bit Atari lately. Also Analog has been putting out their issues on a regular basis and steadily improving their content and appearance since they began to publish again back in April. Not to mention the fact that they have about 80 to 90 percent 8bit material in each issue.

I realize you can do things faster and better with an ST vs the 8bit, but why spend the money if you can do what you need with an 8bit? We have excellent word processors, and though some would hate to admit it, we also have a large base of games. So, come on. Support your local 8bit (a bit corny I realize, but hey, I needed something to fill the space).

I believe it's past time that Mr. Boyce is congratulated for his efforts on the newsletter. In the past ten months he has managed, through much adversity and strife, to put out a fine newsletter and I would just like to say thank you to Jim for all the hard work he has done.

As most of you should know we appeared at the mall's Say kNOw To Drugs presentation. All in all, I think that it went pretty well. We had a lot of people stop by to see our display along with that of the JC3 club. I have to say a big thank you to Tim Hotchkiss for spending a lot of his free time out there manning the display. He had to go without needed sleep at times just to make sure that there was someone there to answer questions and show interested people our Atari.

I'm also surprised more people where unwilling to donate a little of their time to such a worthy cause, especially since drug use runs so ramped through our children. I'm also taking this time to thank Craig Schaff and Jim Boyce for giving of their precious time to help in this endeavor.

Anything Goes by Craig Schaff

Good Morning Atarians!! Hav. that was a good movie!! It was about a local guy who goes to the war front, with his 8bit Atari in his hands. He is faced with the impossible challenge of boosting moral of his brother computer soldiers. It is set in the rugged remote areas of the world where new programs are hard to come by! But wait! Just who is this person, where did he come from, and most importantly, what is a babel fish for any-ways? It all started long time ago in boot camp. Our hero- to-be just arrived with his 8bit in hand and wet behind the ears. He has no idea what the difference is between a monitor and a modem. His drill sergeant, Sergeant Interface (or In-your-face Interface as he was called behind his back), was a hard- as-nails, cut and dry, machine language instructor. He was as tough as they come. But as fate has it, Sarge, as they use to call him, came down with a terminal illness, a digital decease, and had to stay in a hospital and be monitored all the time.

Our hero, who hasn't been named yet (I don't know why), takes over the troop, and leads them on in his own style, changing the way people will live the rest of there lives (what the hell, it's make believe). From Boot Camp, our hero (his name will be coming up shortly),who has a sense of humor that isn't un-like that of Douglas Adams, gets orders to go to training school.

At school, his teacher was Ronnie Ramdisk, who was once, almost, but not quite, nearly hit by a falling meteorite, to be saved only by the fact that it totally missed the earth. Ronnie Ramdisk is also the head of the program storage system for instant retrieval (impressive sounding isn't it). But Ronnie Ramdisk has nothing to do with this story.

Any-ways, on with the story! (To be continued in next issue)

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CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. Membership dues are $15 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. If not using an official membership application, please include a list of your equipment and interests. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships and so on, to: CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The ST INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting takes place on the third Saturday. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118, and begin at 10 a.m. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS sponsored function, including the club BBS.

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	Guy Hurt	484-7675
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8bit Representative	Bill Johnson	675-7166
16bit Represenative	Brian Goluska	332-4415
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
General Pub. Librarian	I. Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Public Librarian	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Coordinator	Guy Hurt	484-7675
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

President's Corner by Leo Sell

Good afternoon Atarians...it's time for news!! I have several pieces of news and information for CHAOS members this month.

First off, a new or stricter policy at the Physics Building does not allow the building to be opened before 10 a.m. on Saturdays. It is the responsibility of a student aide to open it up, and the aide could sleep in... anyway, the NEW starting time for both meetings is 10:10 a.m.

Another important bit of news is the Colossal Computer Sale dates have been changed. The new dates are December 3rd and 4th. CHAOS is sponsoring the sale. Guy Hurt is coordinating the actual CHAOS table displays. With the change of date, we lose the conflict with Comdex which means we could attract more national manufacturers and dealers. Volunteer your person and/or your equipment to Guy today. He'll need all the help you can give him to make this the best display ever.

Last announcement: don't forget the October Auction. The auction will replace the October 8bit meeting (it's a general meeting). Bring your items to sell and your $. We will sell almost anything...with preference given to computer/electronic equipment. There are always some incredible buys. See you there.

Other news...since the October meeting is a General Meeting, we may be discussing certain concerns we have with MAM, as well as a couple of very exciting software products for the 8bit. See you there!!

GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

The Genesee Atari Group is a nonprofit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari Personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc.

GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. during the school year, we also have a 4th Saturday session for second-shift workers. All are welcome. GAG is a participating member of the Michigan Atari Magazine. Membership in GAG includes a subscription to MAM and access to our large library of PD software, Hardware, and magazines. Membership is $15 a year.

General meetings: October 12 & November 9
Saturday Workshops: October 22 & November 26
Information: FACTS BBS 736-3920 Jerry Cross (voice) 736-4544

President's Report

This month is election time! If you would be interested in helping to run the club, WE NEED YOU! Several of current officers will not be running this year, and that leaves several openings that must be filled!

There will be an AtariFest in Toronto in November. I don't have the date yet, but I'll announce it at the meeting, and in the next issue. If you would like to attend, give me a call. I will attempt to form a car pool if I can get enough people interested. The general gameplan will be to leave Flint around 5 a.m., and arrive in Toronto at 10 a.m. and return at 6 p.m. It is also possible to stay the night if you are interested. Contact one of the officers if you would like to attend. That's it for now, see you at the meeting.

Jerry Cross

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall, room 305, on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $25/yr.

President	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer	Dave Bryant	
Sr. Librarian	Steven Buechler	
Librarian	Dale Vincent	
Archiver	Dave Oldenburg	
ST Chairman	Jim Zinke	
SysOp	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS	(616) 657-2665	

Well, it looks like the summer heat has finally subsided... gee, I can hardly wait for the snow?!? What a summer, I spent most of my time in the house (it's air-conditioned) and did quite a few computer projects... who wants to work outside in that heat?

We had about 20 people at the picnic. It turned out just fine, even had some wives and kiddies there too. We managed to get in some games, chit-chat, eat and drink. I hope we get to do this again next year.

Oh yes, our first meeting for the fall season, lots of people there. We even had some ST users. We talked about our projects of the past few months; our DC power supply is ready for a trial run. Last week's thunderstorm played "games" with the BBS. The new supply (assembled by Fred Farleigh) will help keep the BBS up and running after a power outage.

We had a complete demonstration of the "Pro" BBS. We borrowed the system disks so it had everything on it. We were even able to add additional users to the BBS log at the meeting.

I have received information from one of our members (Celina Acquaro) Atari is showing television advertisements for a number of its games in New York City. Maybe some day we will get to see one also.

We are thinking of expanding our user group to accomodate 16bit users. I mean, other systems, as well as the Atari. Keep in mind we are currently, and will continue to support the Atari 8bit machines, but we can take advantage of the experience of other Atari users that have gone to more "modern" sytems. This would open up many more options for us all. We will be discussing this in greater length at the next meeting (October 8th). Be there, you can voice your opinion too.

Have you noted the price increase for membership?? Yah, it's time. The magazine costs a bit more and the BBS has to be paid for also. We try to keep this cost as low as possible, but we still need your support, so don't let this keep you from paying your dues. Remember, we have the Analog Disks, Antic Disks, a huge library of books and disks as well as experienced people to help you along. Well worth the cost!

Frank Fellheimer

Next month: 1. Analog #64;2. Discussion on 16bit computer support; 3. BBS title screen creation; 4. Font Creator... Again??; 5. How about some Games too!

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS', Michigans only 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

GLASS Information: General Meeting, 1st Thursday every month at Athens High School, room 1528, 6 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., located in Troy, at 4333 John R Road, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile). Guests are welcomed and encouraged to come! Planning Meeting, 2nd Thursday at same location. Members only. Mailing Address -- GLASS, P.O. Box 99737, Troy, Mi., 48099. Phone -- (313) 828-1653 (Steve Mileski, President) for info.

From The Desk Of The President Sept. 11, 1988

To start this month I would like to thank an especially hard working, dedicated GLASS member. His efforts and time provided us with our first NewsDisk, including the location, selection, and utilization of a public domain newsdisk program, and the gathering (and in some cases writing) of forty-two (42) text files of reviews, articles, letters, news items, and commentary on Atari ST software, hardware, and company information. He also is one of the primarily responsible persons who brought you the clubs newsletter throughout the year. His articles and reviews graced and enhanced the Michigan Atari Magazine. His attendance at the general meetings and planning meetings this year (so far) is 100 percent. He coordinated and donated to every Public Domain/Shareware software program that we have sponsored. And he has been a great source of downloads from GENIE, DELPHI, COMPUSERVE, and local BBSs. So, without further ado, join me in honoring the president's MEMBER OF THE YEAR - Byron Johnson!

The NewsDisk itself (which I just finished viewing) was more than I had hoped for. Aside from finding it useful and informative I also found several items of information which I had wanted for some time. These include an article about the DESKTOP.INF file and how to modify it, an article about the floppy disk format with information on the directory and FATS table, and a list of computer stores in the area that handle the ST products. This newsdisk is *great* and deserves the support by all. If you are the type of person who would rather read from hard-copy (paper) just select the articles you want to read and print them on your printer. So, just bring a formatted floppy to the meeting and get the current months NewsDisk free. Past months news disks can be purchased from the Public Domain Library.

The general meetings have been great. By the time you read this the October meeting will be over. We are scheduled to deal with various printers. We expect to have at the meeting a CITOH 8510+NLQ (9 pin), an OKIMATE 20 (9 pin), an EPSON LQ800 (24 pin), a RADIO SHACK CGP220 (9 pin color graphics), and a plotter printer, probably an EPSON. We also are attempting to acquire for show an Atari SMM804 laser printer, possibly hooked-up to a MEGA-ST.

The November meeting will feature a show and talk by Ed Hanson on hard-drives. Ed, who is an electronics engineer, has built, modified, and expanded hard-drives. He should be able to answer any questions you may have if you are considering adding a hard-drive to your system or expanding the one you have. And believe me, a hard- drive can make your ST fly! I have had an Atari SH204 20 meg. drive for a year now and can't imagine having to do without it!

The Public Domain Library Catalog has now been expanded to 13 pages with pages 10 to 13 showing update date of August 23, 1988. If you don't have a catalog you can get one at the meetings for $1.00. All updates are free, also at the meetings.

Well, looks like our MIDI-MAZE night will be a go! It's scheduled for the first Thursday of December 12/01/88 from 6:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. If you are not a member of GLASS and would like to attend (no charges) please call me at (313) 828-1653 to r.s.v.p. Midi-Maze is being put on for guests and we would like for you to come. It will be held in Troy, Mi. (17 miles north of Detroit) at the Athens High School in room 1528 with GLASS User Group signs pointing the way. There will be some (small) prizes for single round winners until they are gone. The first prize to be given away will be the Midi-Maze program. I would like to thank Ron Keiler, owner and operator of Rite-Way Computers, for donating the Midi-Maze program for this special night. Rite-Way is located at 11557 12 Mile Road in Warren and carries a large stock of Atari ST hardware and software. So don't forget to mark December 1, 1988 on your calendar for GLASS MIDI-MAZE NIGHT.

I've been an owner and supporter of Word Perfect for about nine months now and am still very pleased with the software and support. Now they (Word Perfect Corporation) have announced an upgrade. If you own Word Perfect just call 1-800-321-3271 for the free upgrade. Have your license number, name, and address

handy and they will ship it to you right away. Thank you WP!

Good news, GLASS now owns three (3) computers for training and demonstration. Aside from our original two 520STfm's (upgraded to one meg.) we have just recently purchased a 1040ST Color system. Now we don't have to borrow parts of systems from members for our meeting nights. Also, if you are a member in good standing and your system farkles on you (you know, gets sick and has to go to the computer doctor) we can loan one to you on a short term to keep you in computing while your system is in the hospital. Another service and reason to be a member of GLASS.

As a final item, the collections for DSLIDE/PICSW7 shareware has closed and a check is on its way to the author. The next public domain software being collected for is SANDPAP.PRG which stands for Still Another News Disk Program. This program, written by Joe Andrews in GFA Basic, is used in our GLASS NewsDisk. We hope to see a high percentage of our members donate at least $1.00. to be collected over the next three months and sent to Joe. So, get the GLASS NewsDisk, look it over, and donate if you like what you see. Let's show our support to the writers of good public domain and shareware software!

Look forward to seeing you at the next meeting,

Steve Mileski

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Meeting: Wednesday, November 2, 1988, Wyoming Public library, 3350 SW., Time: 6:30 p.m.

George Nosky	President/Treas.	(616) 942-1527
2440 Parkridge Dr., SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616) 676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616) 866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616) 795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616) 896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616) 891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616) 957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Director	(616) 784-6230

President's Comments

Summer is history, we are well into the fall season, snow is not far off and GRASS is back into the swing of things for the '88-'89 season. It was nice to see some faces at the September meeting which we haven't seen for a while. GRASS welcomes Ted Recker who lives in Hasings. Ted joined us in September.

Your board met September 21th to plan the new year. Since this is being written in mid-September, results are not available to summarize here. You will have been appraised of our activities at the October meeting. However, as I've said before -- this is your Club -- we are very much open to any suggestions from each and every one of you. We are using, as a guide, the results of the survey which most of you filled out.

Our kick-off demo was ably done by Art Miller. Art showed us the demo disk, Graphic Operating Environment froum Merrill Ward. In case you missed it, this is the 8bit Atari ST-like operating system. It is an interesting piece of software. I'm sure most of us hope it makes it to market. Art also converted a Tracball which he used in place of a mouse. Thanks Art, for a demo well done.

Brian Baughman did a nice demo of Infiltrator which was our September raffle. Steve Davis was the winner. Congradulations! A schedule for future demos was developed at the Board meeting. It will be published in the next issue of MAM.

It's getting time to think about elections again. Our By-laws stipulate that I appoint a Nominating Committee at the November meeting. Please let me know if you would be willing to seive on this very important committee. We should have three people. Also, give some serious thought about running for an office of a director's position. Yes, it takes some time and effort, but not that much. We have a good group of people in GRASS who are willing to help. This makes the job much easier. Please give it some very serious thought.

Chuck Baughman made a motion that was passed at the September meeting. The motion directed GRASS to make a donation to the authors of three specific shareware programs. Checks have been sent to authors of 850/1030 Express, Daisy-Dot II and our own Steve Gilbert for his shareware for bowling leagues. This is an excellent program that bowling secretaries can use to keep all their league's statistics.

I hope to see all of you at the November meeting!

George Nosky

M·A·C·E MACE MICHIGAN·ATARI·COMPUTER·ENTHUSIASTS

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast membership dues are $20 per family, and members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. These libraries are always growing and expanding, with the 8bit library at more than 400 disks and the ST near 200! Eightbit disks are $3 and the ST disks are $4 each.

The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your MACE officers can and will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from our computing. The ST sig meets currently on the first Tuesday of the month and there is a small admission charge to defray room costs. General meetings are on the Third Tuesday, at the Southfield Civic center at Evergreen and 10-1/2 Mile Rds.

Contact MACE at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037. If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from one of the club's libraries.

MACE Board Numbers

MACE WeST	(313) 582-0657 (3/12/2400)
MACE East	(313)978-1685 (3/1200)
The College Board	(313)478-9647 (3/1200)
Molin's Den	(313)420-0407 (3/1200)
DownRiver Outpost	(313) 675-4660

The September MACE meeting was election of officers. Because the meeting took place after the MAM deadline, there aren't any minutes from this meeting. MACE officers are: President, Bill Rayl; Vice President, Kip Kiefer; Treasurer, Heather Neff; Meeting Coordinator, Bob Retelle; Corresponding Secretary, Sharie Middlebrook; Recording Secretary, Mike Olin; Editor, Pattie Rayl; 8Bit Librarian, Ted Newkumet; 16Bit Librarian, Ed Hanson; Membership, Pattie Rayl(313) 973-8825.

MACE EAst BBS: A History by Mike Lechkun

The story of MACE EAst is really a short history of MACE and a BBS program called AMIS. To discuss MACE EAst is to discuss all three topics. You pretty much know the story of MACE. Its purpose then as now is to supplement the non-support given to the customers of Atari Corp.

During the late '70s and early '80s, a new buzzword was developing. It was "telecommunicating," and it pleased the folks at AT&T to no end. What you did was stick your telephone receiver into this pair of suction cups, dialed your buddy's computer and proceeded to "talk" over the wires. This took even the best touch-typist three times as long to say things she/he could just speak in to the receiver.

To have this ability to telecommunicate, software needed to be developed. Seems Ward Christianson of Chicago had this idea to leave his computer on all night and let people call and leave message texts to him or to other callers. Thus was born the Remote Bulletin Board Service. I don't believe Ward invented it, but he sure had a hand in refining it (in fact, his is the oldest non-commercial BBS in existance today).

Anyway, BBS software was being written by a team of MACE members with much of the coding by Tom Giese. Sad to say, Tom has been converted over to the Amiga world. With the encouragement of Atari and the donation of hardware, the first AMIS Bulletin Board System was started. AMIS stands for Atari Message and Information System became an overnight success.

Distributed through MACE and Atari, AMIS was the standard BBS software was written to. For many years, AMIS and FoReM were the only two BBS programs in existance, and MACE made AMIS virtually free to the public. The fact AMIS is still used on many systems attests to it's quality, even with other pd BBSes like Oasis Jr. and FoReM 2.6 readily available.

AMIS does have its shortcomings. It's in Basic, but, being in Basic, can be easily modified by the intermediate to advanced programmer.As a current sysop, I'd like to take credit for the way the AMIS program on MACE EAst is now, but most of the technical stuff was done by Jim Steinbrecher, Sharie Middlebrook, Mike Mitchell, Arlan Levitan, etc., etc. Cosmetics touches to a program are easy; real programming is tough! To make a long story short, AMIS was developed by MACE members, and why it is the program of choice on MACE EAst. I suppose that makes us the "official AMIS support BBS."

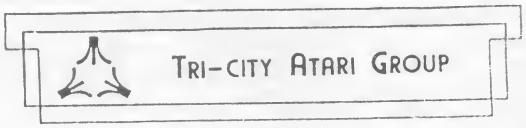
What happened to the "History" part of this article? OK, here it is: When Giese et. al. wrote AMIS, someone had to take it home and run it. There was reluctance to stick it in one of the local Atari stores as it could not be accessed or maintained on a continuous basis. So Giese and partner Tom MacLaney had the responsibilities of running the first Atari BBS in the country. They ran the "MACE BBS" for about eight months when their enthusiasm for it waned. The BBS had to find a new home, and MACE President Arlan Levitan graciously offered his home for the board.

A year or so down the line, MACE BBS found itself travelling again. Then-MACE President, yours truely, volunteered to house the board for this go around. It was during this tenure the folks on the west side of town demanded equal access and lower phone bills. The BBS had gained a national reputation and was constantly busy. It was decided to purchase more equipment and create a west-side BBS, MACE WEST. Except for a short while, Sharie Middlebrook has been the sysop.

About four years down the road, sysoping burned me out. I handed the BBS over to Mike Landis of Clawson, where it stayed until Mike could not devote the time he wanted to towards it. The search was on again. MACE President Tom Sturza formed a search committee to find a more stable home for what was now referred to as MACE EAST. Could Tom and his committee find someone who had the time to devote? Doug Geiss was selected and ran the board for about five months. By this time, I had already missed the sysoping chores and was running a BBS on my own equipment. When the position of Sysop opened up again, I jumped at the opportunity!

And so we come to the present. After a rough restart, MACE EAst is back again. It's currently 24 hours, 300/1200 baud. The phone number is (313) 978-1685. I've even devised an acronym for the initials EAst: Eight-bit Atari source for telecommunications. Although MACE EAst doesn't have the greatest amount of downloads, you'll find 8bit Atari support in an active message base, and the weekly posting of ZMagazine. You'll also notice that EAst is not all in caps or lower case...that's because Sharie runs MACE weST on an ST.

Having been around the Atari scene practically as long as MACE has run a BBS, I believe this article to be correct. My thanks go to Don Neff for having confidence and sticking with me and most especially to Sharie Middlebrook who cheerfully answered even the dumbest of questions I could bounce off her. Sysoping can make good friends off-line as well as on-line!



The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: October 15, 1988 & November 12. 1988.

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	ST Disk lib.	790-1980
Ted Beauchamp	8bit Disk Lib.	686-8872
Char Davis	8bit Editor	686-4170

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bits and ST's, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8bit disks and 70 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1.00 each, and ST disks cost $2.00 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

Letter from the Prez

Neil Demo has set up a bulletin board in the Saginaw area, and it is also the official TAG BBS system. The

BBS is called the Dark Side BBS and you can reach it at 517-799-3895. The Dark Side supports 300/1200/2400 baud and costs $6.00 per year for membership.

STill to Come!

It's October, fall is in the air, and it's time to turn from all of these "serious" meetings we've been having and have some fun! This month will feature games, and we've got some of the newest and hottest to demo! Al Jennings will be showing us Moon Patrol. This game was a classic on the 8bits, and has been recently released by Atari for the ST. The graphics are better, the sounds are great, and play is comparable to the actual arcade game! Show up and see this hot new game. Neil Demo will follow Al with a demo of subLogics new game, Jet ST. Styled after the popular Flight Simulator, this game allows you to fly a jet in combat situations. You can even use Flight Simulator scenery disks!

Our newest member (Mike Ranger) will end the meeting with demos of Typhoon Thomson for the ST, and Jewels of Darkness and Silicon Dreams for the 8bits. As usual, I will have a disk of the month featuring (of course) games! Show up for all the fun...you might see just the thing you want for Christmas (it's not THAT far away you know...).

RelicST to Relish!

Neil Demo started off the September meeting with a demo of DeskCart, a cartridge that provides you with all sorts of useful goodies. DeskCart only occupies a single accessory slot, but when you select it, you can choose from more than a dozen accessories! DeskCart gives you a calculator, notepad, ramdisk, print spooler, control panel and a whole lot of other goodies! Since it's a cartridge, it doesn't consume your precious memory (except for the ramdisk and spooler of course). Looks like a worthwhile addition to any ST (unless you own another cartridge that you need to keep plugged into the cartridge port - like Polydisk). After Neil finished, LeRoy hooked up his IMG Scan and demonstrated how it worked. Set up was very simple - just tape the fiber optic cables to the print head and plug IMG Scan into the cartridge port. The software is GEM-based and VERY user friendly. It even automatically sets itself up!

LeRoy performed several actual scans at the meeting, and they turned out very well. For more info, read the review in this issue...(or look for it in ST Informer).

LeRoy brought the meeting to the end with the disk of the month which contained: 1) ARC_LIST - A utility to list all of the files contained in all of the archives on drive X; 2) DEARC 1.1 - A utility that automatically dearcs a complete disk. It creates a separate folder for each archive; 3) AST_CHEF - Very nice recipe database, GEM-based; 4) GOODIES - Desk accessory loaded with (what else) goodies!; 5) DCOPY198 - Latest version (1.98c) of Dcopy.

See you all at the next meeting!

8bit Equipment Volunteers for September:
Ted Beauchamp 800 XL, Monitor, Disk Drive
ST Equipment Volunteers for September:
Jim Fleming 520 ST & Disk Drive
Bryant Lefreniere Monitor
Remember, if you're bringing equipment, please bring all of the necessary cables (such as power cords, monitor cords, mouses, etc.).

The next meeting of the Washtenaw Atari Users group will be held on October 11th, the feature topic will be Emulators. The meetings are held at 7:30 on the second Tuesday of each month at State Street Computer in Ann Arbor (State St., between E. William and Liberty).

General Meeting, 9/13/88 by Michael Olin, Sec'y

The September meeting of the Washtenaw Atari Users Group was called to order at 7:45 p.m. by the Honorable(!) Jon Brode, who presided over the election of Anton Malje as Newsletter Editor to replace Mike Ranger. Jon noted there would be a short discussion of Macintosh emulation on the ST, courtesy of guest speaker Eric Tobler of Lightening Bolt Computers.

Eric's praise for the ST was obvious, to say the least. The hardware similarities make it hard to understand why the Mac runs slower, has a smaller screen and slower disk access times. However, the "maturity" of the software packages available for the Mac make the ST a viable alternative to spending bundles of $.

Craig Harvey demonstrated the word processing capabilities of the buffer editor in Flash. Craig noted most of his word processing requirements are handled well, although there are few bells and whistles. The most important characteristic of this editor, from Craig's perspective, is its ability to retain and display the entire ST character set, and the flexibility to insert control and graphics characters directly from the keyboard.

Rod Smith demonstrated Word Perfect v4.1 (the August release) and praised the user support he has received from the company. This system DOES have all the bells and whistles, and is probably more word processor than most people will ever need. Rod showed the amazing configurability and the powerful features that make it a state of the art product.

Bob Retelle displayed his newly released Dungeon Master hint book "The Lost Scrolls of Mount Anaias," and discussed some of the features within. Bob noted that a portion of the book is sealed so that the hints are not disclosed all at once.

Russ Crum demonstrated Regent Word, noting his surprise that it is not a lot more popular considering its power and ease of use. Russ also announced the ST Disk Special included ST Writer v2.52, a text editor in a desk accessary, two spelling checkers with updateable dictionaries, and a print spooler (including assembly source code!)

Mike Millage demonstrated two game cartridges for the 8bits, Battlezone and Gato, and the meeting was adjourned at 10 p.m.

From the Treasurer,

We had five renewals for August. David Brzezinski, Bob Retelle, James Sinkovich, Roger Tanner and Paul Walkowski. Welcome back, fellow Atarians.

Notice to all future and renewal members of WAUG. Membership dues are $15 per year, which includes 12 meetings and 12 issues of MAM. Please make checks and money orders payable to Dick Selke, and mail to 31139 Cooley Dr., Westland, MI 48185. Dick Selke

Gen A Sys

RH@SF@TRW (The Real World)
[reprinted from the July '88 issue of the SBACE Newsletter from Santa Barbara ACE.]

In the Beginning, there was chaos, and the universe was without form & void. The Lord looked upon his domain and decided to delare his presence. "I be," He said, and then, to correct His grammar, added "am." If the Lord had decided to work on irregular verb conjugation first, this wouldn't have happened. God would later curse the English language for its part, but in that moment, IBM came into being.

The Lord looked out upon the IBM He had created and said, "This is good." That's what he said, but he shook his head, wondered what the boys at the User Group would say, split the light from the dark and went to bed. Thus passed the beginning and the end of the first day.

On the second day, the Lord summoned IBM unto His presence. "There is chaos out there, and the universe is without form and void. I must correct this and I can use your help. Is there anything you can do for me?"

"I can take care of form," IBM replied. "Put me in charge of computers, and I will take care of form for you."

The Lord thought this was good and said, "Let there be computers. Let IBM have my powers of creation that pertain to computers and form." Thus saying, The Lord went off to his second day's work while IBM created the 1401.

On the third day, while the Lord was out, IBM decided to subdivide the assigned tasks. "Let there be systems that make the computer work, and let them be called operating systems. Let there also be systems that make use of the computer, and let them be called application systems."

But there were no programmers.

The next morning IBM had to give the Lord a status report.

"What did you do yesterday?" the Lord asked.

"I invented the operating system," IBM replied.

"You did?" the Lord shuddered. "Oh dear."

"Yes, I did," IBM confirmed, "but I find I need something you alone can provide."

"And what is that?" God asked.

"I need programmers to use my computer, to operate my operating system and to apply my applications."

"That can't be done now," said the Lord. "This is only the fourth day and there won't be people until the sixth day."

"I need programmers and I need them now," demanded IBM. "If they can't be people -- they can't be people, but we have to work this out today."

"Give me some specifications," God replied, "and I'll see what I can do."

IBM hastily worked up specs for programmers (are specs anything other than hasty?) and the Lord reviewed them.

The Lord knew the specs weren't sufficient but followed them anyway. He also made some programmers that did just what programmers were supposed to do, just to spite IBM. The programmers and IBM spent the rest of the day creating the assembler and FORTRAN.

On the morning of the fifth day, IBM reported to the Lord once again.

"The programmers you created for me have a problem," IBM said. "They want a programming language that is easy to use and similar to English. I told them you had cursed English, though I still don't know why. They wanted me to ask your indulgence on this."

The Lord had cursed English for good reason, but didn't want to explain this to IBM. He said, "Let there be COBOL," and that was that.

On the status report of the next day, IBM announced that computers had gone forth and multiplied. Unfortunately, the computers still weren't big enough of fast enough to do what the programmers wanted. The Lord liked the idea of going forth and multiplying and used this line himself later on that day. This sixth day being particularly busy, he declared, "Let there be MVS," and there was MVS.

On the seventh day, God had finished creation and computers had COBOL and MVS. The Lord and IBM took the day off to go fishing. IBM hung a sign on the door to help programmers in his absence: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again -- and have the following ready before calling IBM." This was the start, and by some accounts, the end of IBM documentation.

On the start of the second week, the programmers went over IBM's cathode ray tube directly to God.

"We have a horrible problem," they complained. "Our users want systems that perform according to their expectations."

"Users!" the Lord bellowed. "Who said that you should have users! Users are the difference between good and bad applications, a funtion I have reserved unto myself! Who authorized you to have users?"

The programmers replied, "Well,...IBM..."

"IBM!" God shouted. "You! You did this to my programmers! You gave them the knowledge of good and evil. For that, you shall suffer through eternity!

"Let there competition. Let it be called TELEX, and AMDAHL, and CDC, and MEMOREX, and TANDY, and ZENITH, and APPLE and, yes, ATARI."

The Lord went through the alphabet several times. "With all this competition, you shall still suffer the pain of anti-trust legislation all the days of your existance."

This was the start of the second week, and it seems an appropriate place to conclude our report. In case you missed something, a summary of key points follows.

Users and their needs are, and always have been, a subject of dispute. Nobody can learn English because it is cursed by God. IBM manuals are doubly cursed, and therefore are twice as hard to understand. Of the programming languages, only COBOL can claim divine origin. People are people, but programmers are something else.

Computers may be a gift from Heaven, but there's no divine help in getting them to work. Because of IBM's initial assignment, there are more forms than anyone knows what to do with. Finally, chaos was part of the original state of the universe and not a product of the data processing industry.

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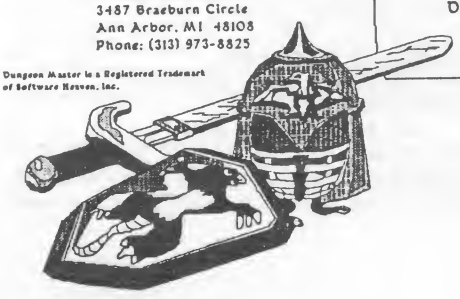

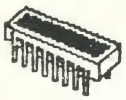

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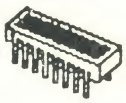

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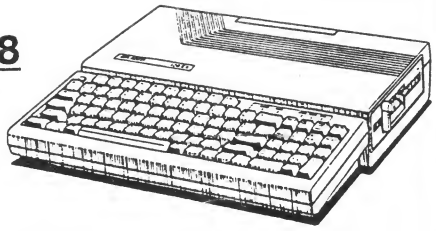

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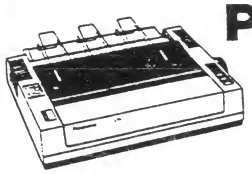

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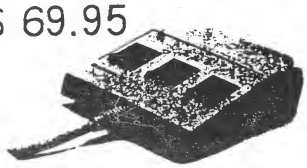

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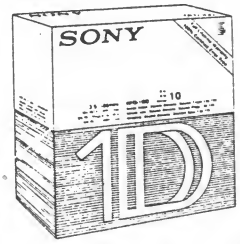

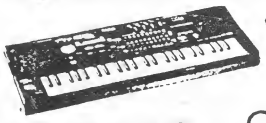

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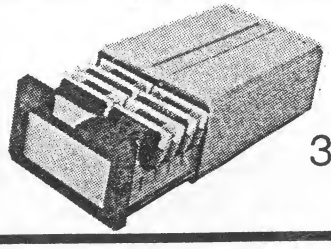

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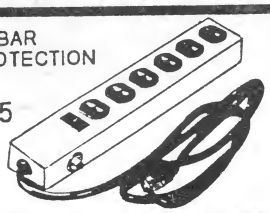

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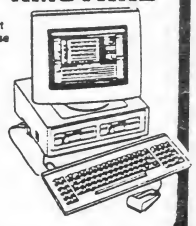

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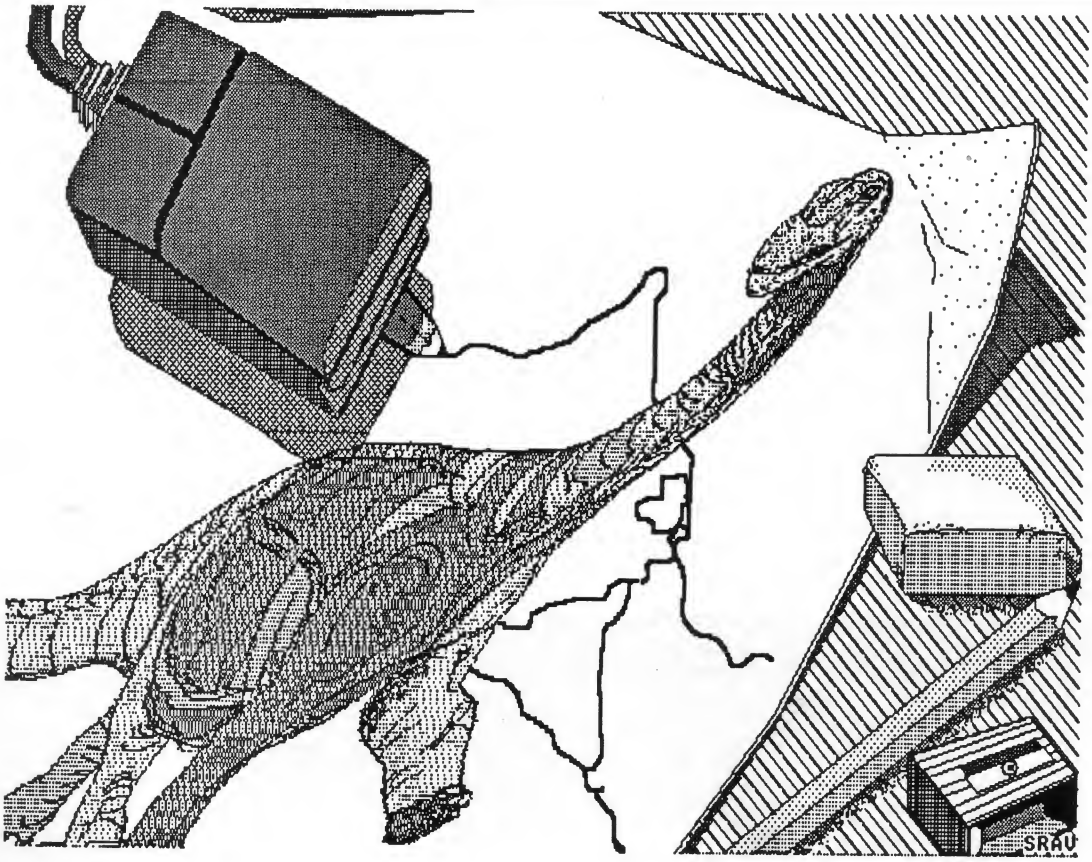
Vol. 3 No. 10
Nov. 1988



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How to Run a Software Company
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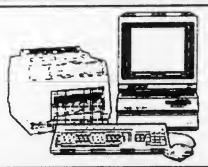

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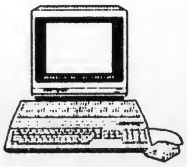

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MAM this Month

Features

Editorial Ramblings	2
From The Reader's ViewPoint	3
Atari News and Comment	4
Asti Talks about -- Shareware and its Future	6
How to Run a Software Company	8
XF551 Review Update (8bit)	9
SPAT from Irata Verlag (ST)	10
Mail Order Monsters (8bit)	12
Prime TIme (ST)	14
Flying the ST	17
An Utility that's Indespensable (ST)	19
Graphics Utilities from Irata Verlag (8bit)	21
Spy Vs. Spy I & II (8bit)	23
Golf SImulations for the ST	25
RS232 Null Modem and Monitor Cable	26
The Wico ErgoStick	28
Last Hacks -- Ask Tim	36

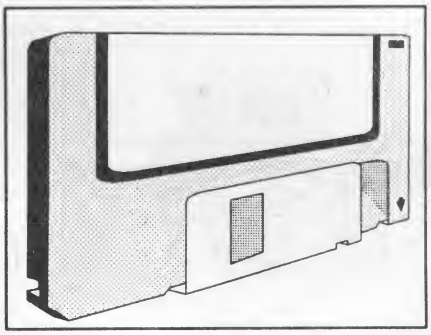
Club News and Minutes

CACE	(Jackson, MI)	30
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	31
GAG	(Flint, MI)	32
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	32
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	33
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	34
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	34
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	35
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	36

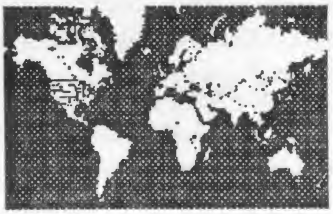
Advertisers

Omega Soft	5
Best Electronics	5
Toad Computer Services	7
Alpha Systems	7
Sideline Software	9
Irata Verlag	11
Mars Merchandising	11
Rentertainment	11
Advanced Programmer's Equipment	13
The Sterling Connection	15
Terrific Corporation	15
Soft-Logik Publishing Corporation	18
Brad Roltgen Enterprises	22
Proco Products	22
Migraph Inc.	24
Application and Design Software	28
WordPerfect Corporation	29
Computer Concepts	32
Compu-Tegrity	Inside Front Cover
ST Archive (ST X-Press)	Inside Back Cover
Rite Way Computers	Back Cover

Volume 3, No. 10 November 1988



ASTI talks about Shareware 6



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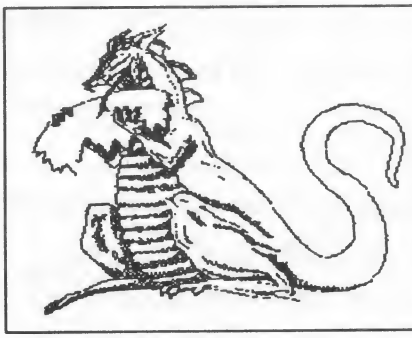
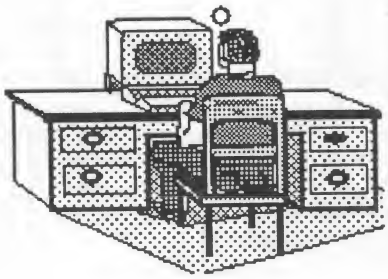


Mail Order Monsters 12



Editorial Ramblings

Greeting from us for another month. The holiday season is approaching, and soon it will be another year! Where did this one go?

This issue was composed using Timeworks' Publisher ST. You've probably noticed the change already. We're going to be using Publisher ST until Publishing Partner Professional (now know as PageStream) is finished and workable. We welcome your comments on this "new" look of the magazine.

This has been a learning experience, since we got used to the idiosyncrasies of Publishing Partner. But, since Timeworks gives such a nicer printed output, we decided to change programs. An excellent example of the output you can get with Publisher ST is the new look of ST X-Press.

We have received favorable comments about last issue's range of advertisements. We are contacting developers in the hopes they advertise to give you the largest selection of products available for the Atari computer line. Also, a fact of life in the printing industry is, the more ads we can put in the magazine, the less the costs are to the clubs and subscribers. We ask your help in making sure you tell advertisers you saw their ad in MAM when you contact them for information. They need to know this information so they know the ads in MAM are effective and continue to place them.

Until next month,

Bill & Pattie Rayl

People Who Make It All Possible

Managing Editor: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Art Work: Steve Volker
Contributors: Allen Bargen, Scott Dzienis, Brent Fisher, Steve Mileski, Don Neff, Bethany Rayl, Bob Retelle, Richard Schrader, Gordon Totty, Jim Tuma, Donavan Vicha and all the participating clubs.

What We Are

The Michigan Atari Magazine is a montly magazine which also serves as the official newsletter of several independent Atari User Groups and is not affiliated with Atari Corp. in any way. MAM is published by Unicorn Publications, 3487 Braeburn Circle, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. For advertising information, please call (313) 973-8825.

Authors: When submitting articles, please provide both printed and magnetic form when possible. Atari Writer/ST Writer or ASCII preferred. Submissions may be uploaded to the Treasure CheST BBS, (313) 973-9137 (3/12/2400 baud). Deadline is the 17th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.

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MAM is produced with a modified 520 STfm, Timeworks' Publisher ST, and a Hewlett Packard LaserJet Series II printer.

From the Reader's Viewpoint

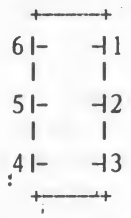
Drive Select Switch Update

Dear Editor,

This is in reference to Don Neff's "Easy Hacking 1050 Drive Select Switch" in September '88 issue of MAM. In the article, it was stated you could "...assign it as Drive 1, 2 or 3...". When in reality, the way the drive circuit board was designed, the switch set-up produces drives 1, 2, and 4.

To have true 1, 2, and 3 drive switching, you'll have to make some changes... start by using a different switch, use switch #276-664 (Radio Shack), which is a DPDT switch. Also you'll need a total of five pieces of wire, three of them at 15 inches, and the other two at 2 inches each. Everything else is the same as Mr. Neff's article.

When looking at the back of the switch (pins towards you) you'll see six pins, starting at the upper right corner, number them clock-wise, 1 through 6, with 6 at the upper left (see below).



Now comes the fun part, wiring. I'll try to explain this as best I can. Using Don Neff's diagram and the above diagram, solder one end of a long wire to the circuit board at location A and the other end to the switch at pin 2. Using a short wire, solder it to pin 2 also, and the other end to pin number 5. Take the second long wire, and solder one end to the circuit board at location B, and the other end to the switch at pin 6. Use the second (and last) short wire and solder it too at switch pin number 6, and solder the other end to switch pin 4. Still with me? Good, almost done. Take the last piece of wire (it's long if you're lucky) and solder it to the circuit board location C and the other end to switch pin 1. That's it for the soldering.

You may install the switch where ever you want, but the front is the most reasonable location, after all, the purpose of the switch is so you don't have to TRY to change drives with your eyes closed and reaching around to the back with your BIC pen or toothpick. When installing the switch, keep pins 1 and 6 at the top (or the only empty pin on the bottom) and you'll have drive 1 in the middle, drive 2 when the switch is up, and drive 3 when the switch is down.

Don, you have a good article, keep up the good work! Thanks!. I almost forgot, as Don had said, make sure that you set the black and white drive select switches to the position for drive 1. That is VERY important!

Craig Schaff (CACE)

Join Us or We'll Slam You

from MAGIC

In an article called Atari News and Comment in the September Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM), editor Bill Rayl blasted a nonparticipating local Michigan Atari users group for policies not in tune to MAM's liking.

MAGIC, the eastern Michigan Atari users group who has steadfastly refused to join the MAM consortium, was sharply condemned for charging "50 cents to $1 admission" to attend a special meeting hosting Atari execs.

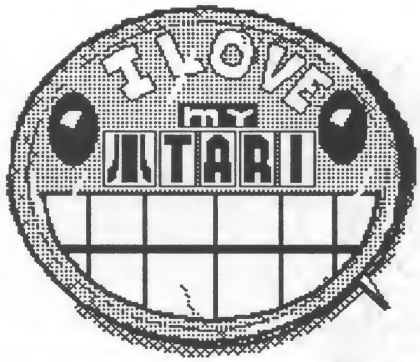
"I was strongly misquoted by Mr. Rayl," says Sourcerer's Apprentice Editor Mike Lechkun. "I went out of my way to call Bill Rayl long distance to share and report this bit of local Atari news. I was shocked to see it turned into a negative slam against us (MAGIC)."

"I told his wife (and MAM co-editor) Pattie that MAGIC was asking for a donation to help defray costs of starting up another Atari Fest effort [as well as to pay for the increase in space needed for the meeting]. It seems to me," commented Mike, "that MAM is allowed to rake in money for it's own ventures, but others trying to serve the Atari community are, in their words, 'tasteless'."

Mike concluded that he'd "be more than happy to make a donation in the Rayls' name if they couldn't cough up a couple of bucks!"

It was MAM, over a year ago, who slammed then-nonparticipating club MACE when they proposed charging nonmembers to attend the monthly meetings. MACE was (and is) losing money rapidly by providing services to nonmembers who were sponging off the group. Because of the article, MACE was embarrassed into changing their newly adopted policy.

The members of MAGIC have always felt that a user group's newsletter helps to define and add personality and individuality to the club. The newsletter is the club's identity to the outside world. It is a shame that MAM feels that their viewpoint is the only valid one in Michigan, and that any other club's views are "considered extremely bad taste."



Atari News and Comment

News Analysis by Bill Rayl

Presidential Conference

In an on-line conference held on CompuServe, Atari President Sam Tramiel answered a few questions concerning Atari's present and future goals. Though the majority of the over 100 attendees of the conference expressed dissatisfaction with the answers (or non-answers depending on who you talk to) Tramiel gave, others felt the conference was a positive sign.

The conference was originally planned for Sept. 27, but was rescheduled due to date conflicts. On October 3, Tramiel had very little concrete things to say, but he did present an overall impression of optimism about Atari's plans to push more in the US market.

According to Tramiel, Atari will begin their US campaign in earnest starting at the Las Vegas COMDEX show (November 14-18). "We are shipping all models in Europe, even the Abaq, to developers. We will start shipping in earnest to the US market in early 1989, including the ST and the line of PC compatibles and our new members of the ST family," Tramiel stated early on in the conference.

Tramiel went even further to say that he hopes Compute will revive their ST-specific magazine "when they see tens of thousands of STs sold MONTHLY in the US." [Emphasis added.]

Other items that were mentioned in the conference include:

Atari has signed a "major deal" with a large DRAM supplier The TT, Atari's 68030-based computer, is in the works, and Tramiel hopes to show it in early '89 Atari is now diverting machines from Europe to the US and shipping them to "our few but loyal ST dealers"

The new TOS ROMS should be available in early '89, dependent upon ROM deliveries Atari has a computer system set up in Sunnyvale where Service Center employees, dealers and sales reps can discuss problems, etc. Atari is "selling many tens of thousands of the XE/XL line in Europe, the Middle East and Latin America." And we thought the ST was doing well in Europe! Atari IS working on a "portable ST" There is currently a $50 rebate on the purchase of an XE Game System. Contact Atari Customer Service at (408) 745-2367 for more information

Near the end of the conference, Tramiel stated, "We plan for Atari to be number two or number three in the world personal computer market, and we hope to make the ST one of the standard machines in the US during 1989."

The conference was originally scheduled to last two hours, but the discussion ended after an hour and 15 minutes when Tramiel said he had to leave. At that time, over 20 questions were still "in the que" waiting to be asked. Tramiel said he would be willing to schedule another conference in the near future.

Though most of what was heard in the conference was "nothing new," according to most, this is the first real contact we've had with Sam Tramiel (or any of Atari's Powers that Be) in a long time.

Neil Harris Leaves Atari

As many of you have already heard, Neil Harris has resigned from Atari and is now Director of Product Development at GEnie. Harris was the spokesperson for and on-line presence of Atari for the past few years, and his leaving has sparked a lot of commentary.

Harris has not given any specifics as to why he left Atari, other than to say it was for "personal reasons," and to state his leaving should in no way be interpreted to mean he and Atari parted company on less than friendly terms. In the October 3 conference, Sam Tramiel said, "I wish Neil a lot of success in his new job. It was a pleasure to work with him over the years that I have known him."

CompuServe Changes

The Atari ST and Atari Developers Forums on CompuServe recently got a big face lift. The areas are now named Atari Arts and Entertainment and Atari Productivity. All the previous files available for download in the old areas have been ported to the new areas, and the message topics have been re-started. As a side benefit of the changes, the message bases can now contain more messages before old messages are deleted to make room for the new.

Enter PageStream

By the time you read this, SoftLogik Publishing may have begun shipping the "final" version of their new Desktop Publishing software! According to Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Brian Sarazin, the US version is done and the manual is due back from the printer soon. Now called PageStream, the program offers a full-featured publishing package delivering excellent output even on dot matrix printers. [Ed: See the PageStream ad elsewhere in this issue and judge for yourself!]

If this "final" release version fulfills the promises of power and flexibility the "beta" version only hinted at, then PageStream will be a big hit and may regain some of the ground lost to Timeworks Desktop Publisher ST.

ST Magazines -- Ups and Downs

ST Applications, a "programming oriented" magazine for the 16bit Atari, has ceased publication, bringing the ST publication casualty number up to two (Compute's ST being the other).

On a brighter side, ST X-press made a stunning "comeback." After being absent from the stands since last April, the magazine has been reorganized and has a new, and in my opinion much improved, style. Check out this month's issue at your local dealer (if you have one, that is!).

Atari in Sears?

Reports have been surfacing that Atari has signed a number of large chain stores to begin carrying Atari equipment. The impressive list of stores includes Sears, Montgomery Ward, ACE Hardware and Tru Value Hardware. As of this writing, no one at Atari has commented officially on the subject. A couple of sources have stated that the deals involve the 2600/7800, XEGS and possibly the 8bit lines. If true, this may cause the few 8bit Atari dealers still out there to drop the 8bits, but it should be encouraging for many who have no 8bit Atari dealers in their area.

Until next month...

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Is your local Atari users group planning an Atari Fair in the new future? Please contact us with the details! Our show schedule for this year still has some openings!

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ASTI Talks about --
Shareware and its Future

by ASTI (GLASS)

Okay, aSTarians, you are now getting comfortable with your ST and have fine-tuned its operation with several utilities (haven't you?) including some of the utility Shareware programs. Your satisfaction with the Shareware programs is proven by the very fact that you are still using them. But, have you given any thought as to the source of those programs? Before going on to tell you of some of my favorites and their uses, I want you to read the following letter.....

Charles F. Johnson
P.O. Box 1250
Pacific Palisades, CA. 90272
Re: DESK MANAGER Vers. 2.1, Rev. 5/11/88
Dear Mr. Johnson,

Well, you did it again! I'm talking about Desk Manager, of course. As a member of the GLASS user group of TROY, Mich., I have been aware of some of your other fine programs and donated to them through the GLASS Shareware Recognition program. After getting Desk Manager and using it only for a short while, I decided to send you $15 for it on my own. Thank you for another fine utility program.

May I suggest just one small enhancement that would round-out this boot-up program? How about a time/date setting function that could be optioned out? Although I do have a clock/calendar, DeskCart, there are times I don't wish to use it. Also, there are many others that don't even have that enhancement. This would give your program all of the features of Super Boot, and it is smaller, runs faster, and (in my opinion) a more comfortable environment.

I have heard rumors of your moving to programming in the MS/DOS PC world, can this be true? Doubtless you are very capable and will be successful, but the Atari ST world would be losing one of the few truly fine programmers we have. I am aware of your frustration with the meager revenues from your Shareware, but we in aSTari land are doing our best to promote it and the follow-through of the donations. Perhaps you would reconsider if future revenues increased?

In closing, I would like to inform you that this letter will be sent to the Michigan Atari Magazine, ST-Informer, and the GLASS Newsletter, for publication within an article to promote contributions to good Shareware. A response to this letter would be appreciated, informing us of what your future plans are. Give us a chance to show our appreciation for your talents and efforts.

Thank you,
Steve Mileski

...if you will notice the last paragraph, an author of several pieces of *good* Shareware may no longer be writing for us because of our selfishness or procrastination in sending in our donations. I am as guilty as the next person. But on the thought of losing a programmer as astute as Chas Johnson, author of Desk Manager, DSlide, and PicSW7, I've decided it's time to change my ways. Today I'm sitting at my word-processor and composing letters of thanks, and checks, for the Shareware programs that I use and love. Don't you think it's about time you did also?

For those of you who are unaware of the good programs to be had, I humbly submit a small sampling of some of my favorites from past and present. My apologies to the authors of programs I forgot or am not aware of, and for any errors or omissions that may follow.

By Charles F. Johnson -- Desk Manager, a program, that at boot-up from an auto folder, allows you to a) select which resolution (low or medium) to boot-up in and match the selected Desktop.Inf files for all three resolutions, b) select which auto folder programs you wish to run c) select which desk accessories you want loaded, and 4) display a picture on the desktop while loading.

By John Brochu -- Dslide, a program that allows viewing of pictures of many formats including Degas, Degas Elite, NEOChrome, Tiny, and Spectrum, for varying periods of time.

PICSW7 is another picture viewing program that also let's you actually change the format of the picture.

By George R. Woodside -- Turtle, a hard-drive back-up program that does a very fast back-up thanks to four included ram-disks, for single-sided, double-sided, and twistered formats of each.

By Chris Latham -- (also the author of Universal Item Selector, a very reasonably priced -- $19.95 -- file selector replacement) Alarm Clock is a desktop accessory that allows the time to be shown (or not shown) in the upper right hand corner. It also has a calendar and alarm clock to remind you of appointment or just tell you when it's time to turn off the computer and go to bed!

SI-Ram is a combination Print Spooler and Ram Disk, both are removable.

By J.A. Wrotniak -- AW_PRINT is a

text file print queuing program that lets you print text files and puts in an end-of-page break so the printout does not print over the paper perforations. You can even have it print a header including file name, date, and page number.

By Joe Andrews — SANDP (for Still Another News Disk Program) is a great disk newsletter program with many great features. This is the program that GLASS user group uses because it is one of the best!

By F. Gregory Schneller — WORD400 is a desk accessory word processor with more features than you can imagine including SetDate/Time, alarm clock/calendar, block functions, and built-in HELP screen.

By Kyle Cordes — Mouse_Dbl, when run, makes your mouse cursor move twice as fast so you don't have to move your mouse as far. Effective only in medium and high resolutions. Note: not compatible with Word Perfect.

By Mike Yokem — Scrn_Sav desk accessory allows you to blank out your screen to save from screen 'burn-in' so you can go to supper and leave your computer turned on.

By Tim Purvis — DiskFree cuts the hard-drive 'SHOW INFO' access time by about 400% when you want to know how much room you have left on a partition.

Well, these are just a few of my favorites. If you like and use a public domain or shareware program, please think of the programmers, and send them a few dollars for their efforts. [Ed: Steve has asked us to clarify Charles Johnson is not leaving the ST for the IBM world; Steve mistook him with Tom Hudson.]

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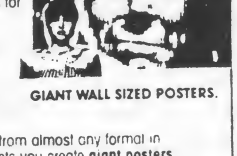
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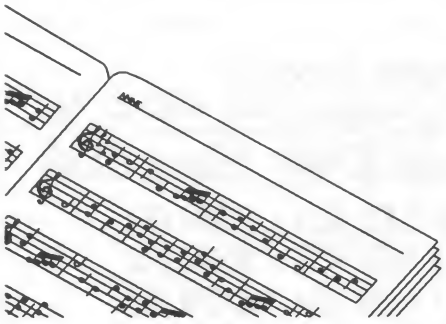

How to Run a Software Company

by Richard Schrader (WAUG)

This is about MIDISoft Corporation, a company in Bellevue, Washington that makes a MIDI music sequencer program just for the ST. If you're not into MIDI, don't turn the page because this is also a story about service, a concept that seems to be unfamiliar to many other companies.

I got a flyer in the mail almost 3 years ago about this sequencing program I never heard of called MIDIsoft Studio. It seemed to have some nice capabilities, but for $99 I wasn't tempted to experiment. But I ended up experimenting anyway. Michtron's SuperConductor was indeed powerful in certain ways, but the user interface always seemed awkward and the "event editor" seemed to leave you to fend for yourself in a sea of MIDI data (as do MOST "event editors" — Every pitch, volume, sound change, MIDI channel of every note in a song can be altered, but there is no way to really tell where you are in the piece.).

Then I tried "the old reliable" Hybrid Arts, who opened Atari up to the MIDI world in the 8bit days. Their "EZ-Track ST" turned out to be *very* limited. You could record, and bump tracks around. Big deal. It turns out the REAL program is MIDItrack ST and costs almost $300. I paid $400 in 1983 for their 8bit version with interface. Now it's under $100! But the MIDImate interface is still nearly $200, still high for budding Atari 8bit MIDI users.

It was the same story with Dr. T, Sonus, and other established companies. You were expected to spend big "professional" bucks to get software that did anything! Seeing the situation, I ripped through my files, finally, found the old MIDISoft flyer, and sent in 99 "unprofessional" bucks. Except for an old review in Antic, I never saw much notice of the company in the music press. "Probably out of business by now anyway," I thought. My scepticism went unvindicated when MIDISoft Studio arrived with many powerful editing features. No bells and whistles, but most of the features I needed to do serious musical work in a friendly, easy to use, interface.

I could cut in on any track at specific measure (or note, with some effort) and remove what I didn't want to hear. It didn't allow for actual looping, but it could direct any specified passage, to *any* location *any* number of times, which was even more powerful! It could record 127 different "program changes" (that is, a change in sound), but only from my synthesizer. Problem! With the 2-digit display on my synth, I could only use 99! Oh well, small matter! I reshuffled my sounds and was soon sequencing away with no problems. Then I thought it was time to transfer my old 8bit files to my ST, but I lost all the channel information when I would play it into MIDISoft.

Still, at the price, it made composing much easier. I spread the word to my user group, but after the demo, I came home and it started crashing! Too close to powerful speaker coils? Who knows?! This is where the service part comes. I called and talked to Vice President of Marketing, Marsha Murry. Get this, she is actually *sympathetic* to my problem. (I pinch myself, I'm still there...) Then, when she can't reach a technician, she *offers* to do something about my problem at *no charge*. Reality slips away as I vaguely hear Rod Sterling chanting, "You have just stepped into a strange new world...the Service Zone!" I pull myself together enough to say I'll be happy to send in the original disk so they can fix it in 3 weeks.

The disk arrived back, on time on a blazing hot day, as I was going out the door. "Good!, I'll put on this safe place on the bottom shelf and close the curtain," I think. But in spite of precautions, I come back to find an evil splinter of sunlight falling across the room directly onto the software! The data was corrupted and back it went. Yet it got back into my hot little hands in a week or so, all fixed with no fuss.

The pleasant surprises weren't over. The copy they sent me was updated! The major change being that now "program changes" could be made by mouse! So I got back the other 28 programs. With so much going right I was enthusiastic about step two in the life of a program: prepaying $25 for version 3.0, Advanced Edition. It was promised by the end of June. As I licked the envelope I thought, "Well, if I get it by the end of summer, I'll be doing all right." This time I was right. It was late — by 2 weeks, arriving with profuse apologies.

The best new feature is the Event Editor, which it didn't have at all before. It is now one of the best you can buy. Any piece of information can be added or altered with great ease and speed with the mouse. Best yet, you can play or step through the song *hearing* and *seeing* exactly where you are! There is also extended velocity editing. That is, you can change the volume of any voice by any number or percentage in any section, or

choose to change it over a given period of time! Another feature is that several channels can be put onto one track, and then extracted again. Now I have no trouble porting over my old 8bit files. This has applications in working with other sequencers.

Another interesting feature is that you can access and run a different program and then go back to music without leaving MIDISoft or going to the desktop.

Unfortunately, file compatibility with Activision's Music Studio and other programs was not achieved, as promised. There is an industry effort to make MIDI song files a universal standard, but apparently this is still being worked on. Instead, they substituted a program to convert their files to Hybrid Arts format. Why would I want that? Probably to use their score printing program (EZScore). Of course, this also produced profuse apologies, and a promise that when compatibility comes through, they'll send it, if you want.

They also apologized for introducing copy protection, sort of. Backups can be made, using the original for a key. Then they say, if you don't like that, they'll send an unprotected version!

Although this version has had a few problems, for the price ($150), it actually outperforms software that costs more than twice as much. I don't see reviews of it in the trade papers, and they don't advertise. Could there be a relationship between all three things: low price, no advertising, no reviews? I can recommend MIDISoft Advanced Edition to any MIDI user needing professional performance.

MIDISoft Corporation, PO Box 1000, Bellevue, WA 98009 (206) 827-0750.

XF551 Review Update

by Brent Fisher

Last month, I had some negative comments to make about the XF551 disk drive. The two most notable were about subLOGIC's Flight Simulator II and lack of high speed I/O that was supposed to be there.

First, I called subLOGIC. The operator I spoke to said subLOGIC was aware of the problem and that they would be making a decision during the month.

Well, I have to admit I have heard that line before, and I doubt they will do anything to fix the problem. My suggestion is to have as many people call subLOGIC as possible until they fix the problem. The toll-free number for subLOGIC is 1-800-637-4983. If you would prefer to write to them, they can be reached at subLOGIC Corporation, 713 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign, IL 61820.

The lack of high speed I/O has been temporarily solved by a modification to SpartaDOS called XF3.2d. This version of SpartaDOS will give you high speed I/O, but not with the ultra skew, which means that if you have a US Doubler 1050, you won't be able to access the high speed I/O on that drive. It is rumored that ICD is coming out with SpartaDOS 4.0 that will give high speed I/O to the Doubler drives and also Indus drives.

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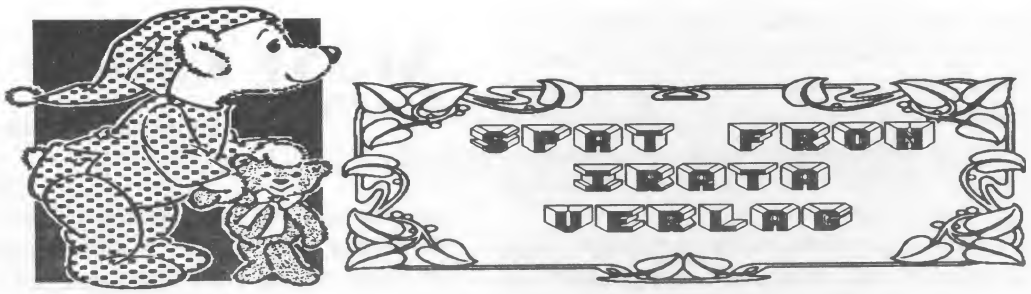


by Patricia Snyder-Rayl

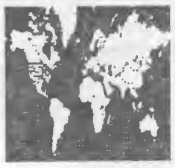
Irata Verlag's SPAT program is a desktop presentation/drawing program originally written to accompany the Silver Reed thermal copier that has been modified to work as a 200 dpi scanner-printer on the ST. Irata Verlag (a German-based company) has since added printer drivers for Epson (and Compatibles) and Panasonic printers.

Since I didn't have one of the scanners, I couldn't test that part of the program, but samples from Irata Verlag show the scanner is very good and the price of $800 is unbeatable! *[Ed: The SPAT program is free if you purchase the scanner.]* I was able to test out the 9-pin capability, and was impressed with the quality on a 9-pin Panasonic. One drawback for me was the lack of a laser printer driver, but your creations can be saved as Degas or IMG pictures, and then printed using a laser — as was done with this article's graphics.

SPAT is composed of five "rooms," one each for graphics, scanner, text, layout and printing. When you first boot the program, you're presented with five doors that each lead to one of the rooms. In each room, you have a number of icons displayed on the right side of your screen. The rest of the screen contains your work area. You can exit the room you're presently in by clicking on the door icon or by typing the first letter of the room you want to go to. The latter method saves time, allowing your to jump from one area to another with a single keystroke.

In the text room, you have a choice of different styles, such as italic, bold, tall or short. If you purchase Font Albums from Irata Verlag, you have a number of different fonts, but these allhad German names, making font choices a guessing game at first! I suggest printing a sample of each font and renaming the fonts for future reference. The variation on the fonts is well done; everything from an Old English font to a modern 3D font (shown in the article title above).

Typing in text works similar to Degas and other paint programs. You chose the font you want, a "typing box" appears and you place the box on the page. Then you can type anything you wish, but the



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Literally THOUSANDS of pictures in IRATA VERLAG's ALBUM Disks...

text doesn't automatically word-wrap at line end, and the text doesn't scroll downward when you try to type below your work area. You have to exit text mode, select the page icon and move the small box that represents your work area to the area in which you wish to continue typing.

Then, if you wish to continue in the same font, go to the Special font selection, tell the program you don't want another font and get the typing box back again. This can get a little tedious if you have to do it many times. You do have full cursor control though, which makes editing easy. The text is always in "type-over" mode, so you need to be careful when deleting or spacing over text.

The layout room is where you import your graphics. This program imports only Degas, IMG and Irata Verlag's scanner pictures. However, the program has a number of available picture "Albums," anything from Print Shop style icons to actual IMG scans. If you have a picture you want to use, but it's not in the right format, you can use the Pic Reader program from Irata Verlag. You can also use the Pic Reader to convert IMG to Degas format.

You can place your Degas or Album pictures anywhere on the page you'd like. However, with IMG pictures, you can only place them in the upper left corner of your document.

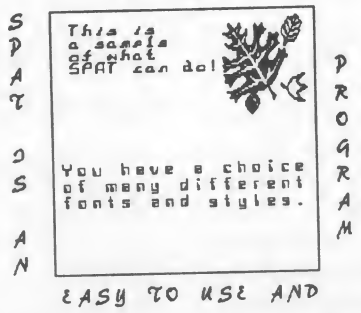
If you want to put a border around the picture or the text or edit a graphic, the graphics room contains icons for drawing circles, boxes and all manner of fill patterns. You can also choose borders from Irata Verlag's Borders album.

Once the page is set, you're ready to go to the printing room. One nice touch here is the ability to do a test print of the page. This allows you to print a draft version of the page and make any changes before you subject your 9-pin printer to the agony of a final quad-density print.

The various graphics used in this review were composed with SPAT in a very short time after just one sitting with the program. The documentation says the program was originally given to several people with no documentation to see just how easy it was to use. Irata Verlag made some refinements based on the comments

of those people. You don't have to worry about documentation though! The program comes with a doc file on disk, which you can print out. [Ed: At the time of this review, the printed documentation was not available.]

There are many nice touches to the program, including an "OOPS" icon! This allows you to undo the last thing you did, which I found came in VERY handy! Another nice touch is a bar graph pictorial of the free memory left in your computer. You run into trouble if you run out of memory, and this graph shows you how close or far you are from that. You can place many pictures on the page, but you should delete unwanted pictures, since they eat memory like candy.


POWERFUL
SPAT DESIGN
This is a sample of what SPAT can do!
You have a choice of many different fonts and styles.
PROGRAM
EASY TO USE AND

I would recommend this program to the person who doesn't have need of a full-blown desktop publishing package. SPAT is excellent for creating flyers, advertisements, invitations, certificates or other similar uses. If you do have a desktop publishing package, SPAT would make a good companion program for creating headlines and artwork. SPAT is only $39.95 alone, or $50 with the Pic Reader program, and requires a monochrome monitor and 1meg of internal memory.

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Mail Order Monsters

by Brent Fisher (CACE)

Hey, all you action/adventure, D&D, and shoot 'em up 8bit fans, have I got a game for you! This is also a game for those of you who like construction sets, since you get to build your own monsters. But you should like some of the other game types that I mentioned above.

Once the first side of the disk is loaded, you are given a short demonstration of what you will be doing later as you go along. The first screen also gives you the option of choosing whether you will be playing a one or two player game or which level you will be playing on — Beginner, Intermediate, or Tournament level. You will then be told your catalog is in the mail as the disk loads in the next portion of the game, so you can select your monster.

This is where you start to have some fun. You've got a choice of twelve different monsters to choose from. Each of these monsters has different traits and enhancements they come with in the Beginner level (in the other two levels you have the pleasure or displeasure of buying and paying for your extra enhancements and traits). Once you have chosen which monster you will be using, you get to give it a name, and, of course, flip the disk so that you can get down to battle. I suggest you read the manual before you go into battle. Of course you can always hit the space bar to pause, so that you can do so. After you have either trashed your opponent or he has done the same to you, you are taken to the winner's stand so you or your enemy can be congratulated. Then you have the choice of whether you would like to have another battle, if so you also have a choice of a new opponent. If you decide that one battle with your chosen monster is enough, then you can go back and get another. After a few fights, I would recommend the player go back and try out as many monsters as you have the patience for, since by knowing which you like best you will have a better idea of the monsters you would like to buy.

After you have had enough of the Beginner level, you can go on to the Intermediate level of play. In this level you get to not only choose your own monster, but you also get to choose what weapons, traits, and extras that you would like your monster to have. In this level, your opponent will be harder to defeat and you will have to work on strategy to defeat your opponent.

In Tournament play (this is what you have been striving for all along, isn't it?), everything becomes tougher, but the rewards are greater. Here your monster can be killed and never seen or heard from again, or you can defeat your opponent and get rich enough to buy more, stronger, and better-equipped monsters.

This game has a pleasant surprise for you two-drive owners. It allows you to put your owner disk (which you create when you start the Tournament level) in drive two which helps to cut down on drive swaps and disk access time. This also brings us to one of the game's weak points. This program takes awhile to load, though I doubt it's anywhere near the time it takes Commodore users. Also, the computer's monsters get tougher as yours do. It seemed to me that they got tougher than I did, but it sure does keep the game lively.

For those of you who own Basic XL or XE, a friend of mine programmed an editor that allows you to change your monster's qualities and your owner information. The only catch is you have to win a battle against an opponent for these changes to become incorporated into your monster. If you are interested in this program, I can be contacted at: Brent Fisher, c/o C.A.C.E., P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Make sure you put something about Mail Order Monster Editor on the envelope.

Oh, one other thing, this is not just a plain shoot 'em up game. You will also need strategy to defeat your opponents in the higher levels. If you enjoy a good challenge and have a joystick that won't come apart in your hands, then you will enjoy this game.

Mail Order Monsters, Electronic Arts, Retail price: $14.95

Notice To All User Group Members

The Great Lakes Atari ST Support (GLASS) would like to extend an invitation to you to attend a free evening of entertainment. On December 1, 1988 at 6:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. we invite you to play MIDI-Maze with us at Athens High School in room 1528. There is no charge, but we do ask that you reserve a guest spot (due to limited room) in advance. Reservations can be made by calling Steve Mileski, at 828-1653 after 4 p.m. weekdays or on weekends. Note to GLASS members... It would be helpful if you also would R.S.V.P.

What is MIDI-Maze? Just sixteen STs hooked up by MIDI cables, with a player piloting a "Happy Face" though a maze, attempting to shoot the other fifteen players. There will be small prizes awarded to the survivors of rounds, including the MIDI-Maze game software, donated by Rite-Way Computers of Warren (thanks Ron Keiler!).

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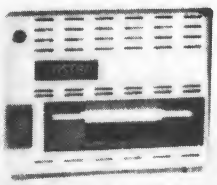

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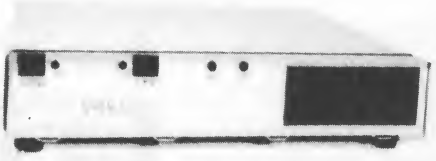

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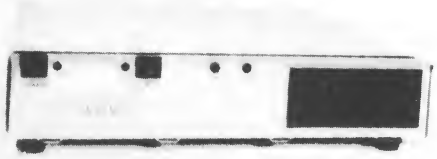

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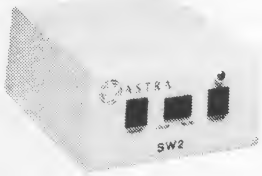

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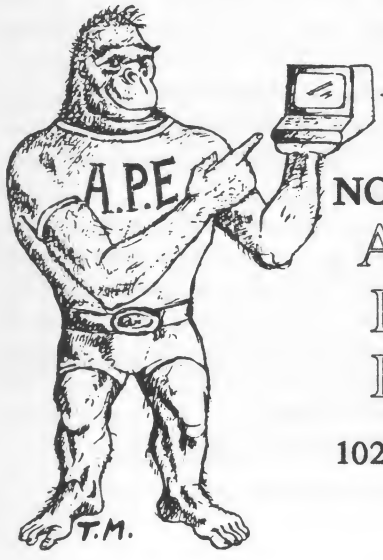

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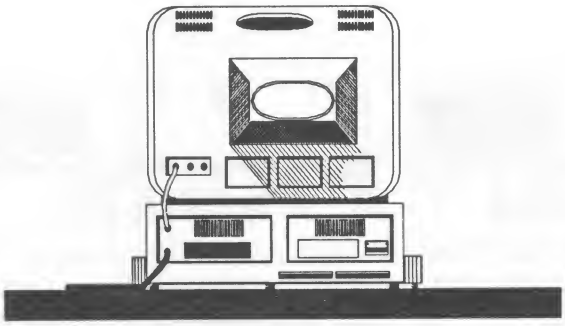

Prime Time

by Gordon Totty (MACE)

Couch Potatoes of the world unite! Throw off the shackles of torpor and apathy (you know this as "T&A") to spring into action and dazzle spouse and family. You'll show them you're not dead as you amble over to your computer, boot up Prime Time, settle into your computer chair, and stare at the monitor for a pleasant break from TV. By golly, if they observe you closely, they may see your mouse finger twitch now and again.

At last, a game for the living dead of the mid-20th century, the tele-zombies. Yes, Prime Time could well be the game for you ... and you ... and you over there!

You have always known you could program the networks better than those New York and Los Angeles air-heads, haven't you? Now, you can prove it, baby, and never have to be more than a few feet away from your only true, loyal, and non-critical companion, the tube.

The tube, the tube, my kingdom is the tube! Pity the poor lady who suffered from terror and angst (yes, the dreaded "T&A" syndrome, first described in the Western world by Dr. Lenny Bruce) on hearing that she had to have a tubal ligation. She thought that meant no more TV. On hearing the real meaning, she gladly underwent the surgery without anaethesia so as not to miss Kelly & Co. This demonstrated that the tube can be therapeutic and analgesic (or, as you know it, T&... oh, enough already!). By the way, angst is to a Yuppie what anxiety is to you.

Commercial message: Do you like to play with words, like this miserable, sniveling, wretched writer? Then you, too, may be suffering from the pain and itching of nerdhood. Don't be a nerd! Buy Preparation-X and come up from the hots to be cool, which is a long way to come, baby. Then, you can squeeze the charming in Marble Borough county. Double your pleasure, or double your money back. You pick; your nose knows!

(Dear Lord, what has TV done to me? My teachers always said the electromagnetic leakage would fry my cortex ... were they right?)

The only exception to being near your tube is that you will have to leave the house to go buy this game from First Row Software Publishing, Inc. Actually, you should buy it from United Computer or some other advertiser in the Michigan Atari Magazine. ("Scratchest thou the back attached to that entity which pleasurably scrapest thine own." —From the nine commandments of business. I haven't written the other eight yet.) Let the local vendors figure out how they are going to get it from First Row, which is located in King of Prussia, PA, one of two addresses that fascinate me. The other is used by all the rebate and contest companies in the world, which are located in Young America, MN.

Attention! We interrupt this idiotic drivel for an important bulletin. We take you now to Olde America, FL, for an important announcement. Here's the latest poop about an amazing new product breakthrough, pickled, powdered prunes, a powerful purgative, preferred by our President and parades of purple-faced, panting people when they periodically need that extra push to propel a particularly pungent....

(I know why I write this stuff; my mother botched my toilet training. The important question is, "Why do you read it?" Nothing on TV? If so, I understand. The writer's strike drove me to read a paragraph or two, too, twice. The trouble with alliteration, like punning, is that once you start you cannot stop. With both, better a life of crime; it is less offensive to those around you.)

Prime Time is one of eleven games marketed by First Row for the IBM and compatibles. Of these eleven, it is the only one released for the Atari ST. Nine are available for the Commodore, five for the Amiga, five for the Macintosh, four for the Apple II, one for the IBM System 2, and none for the XL/XE. Kind of sad, isn't it?

The premise of the game is that all three major networks (SBC, ANT, and NBS) have fired their programming executives. You, and up to two friends, can be hired to take their places. If you opt to play alone, the program assigns Fred Silverfish to be the new program executive for each of the other two networks.

You can move shows around in the schedule, drop shows, buy new ones, develop new ones yourself, bid for major specials, push selected shows with extra advertising, and "do lunch." You are expected to watch your budget, follow the entertainment news as reported in a trade paper, study trends and ratings, and beat the competition.

Your network earns money from advertising, which is influenced by your ratings. You decide to spend money to help the ratings, buying, developing, or pushing shows. The game is played for an imaginary year, one month at a time. At the end of the year, the player with the highest amount of money wins.

A tip to the player is to watch your money, but not too closely. The first time I played this, I earned the highest ratings. In one month, ten of the top twelve rated shows were mine. I was on a roll! It cost a lot. I lost. The next time I played, I watched the money very carefully. Too carefully. I lost again, by a bigger margin and with terrible ratings.

This game requires care and attention to detail to be successful. It seems to embody a pretty good business simulation underneath the surface humor. "Real world" entrepreneurs who are too extravagant lose. The same fate occurs when the business is run in an overly restricted manner. Spend money to make money, but wisely and where it counts most.

A lot of effort has been exerted on this game to make it humorous. The box includes a contract for you to sign. It begins, "Between You, Sweetie-Baby, and Us — Big TV Network Hey, Herewith, witnesseth my manicured hand, ..." I didn't think it was funny, but maybe you will.

The game includes 150 programs and 15 specials. You can use your money to develop more, if you wish. Each time you start the game over, it selects about half of these shows for use, so the game has the advantage of playing differently each time you run it. A few of these are listed below, for you to see what you work with in Prime Time.

- *Love That Blob!* Extraterrestrial lands on earth, buys green leisure suit, and looks for babes.
- *Frisco* Lots of hills, thrills, and spills in this shrill swill.
- *Stronger Than Gert* Housewife zapped by ammonia rays becomes bald, tee-shirted, and strong!
- *Recovery Room* What happens AFTER the big surgery. See all the drama of tubes being removed.
- *T.G.I.F. Thank God It's February!* Oprah & Phil make fools of themselves.

If you can stand it, there are only 145 more of these blurbs in the game. Additionally, you are given the category of each show (e.g., comedy, drama, game show, etc.) and a rating for sex and a separate rating for violence.

During the game, you are presented with some rather complex and large listings, including a television guide for the week and a listing of about 70 shows and their ratings. Some of these materials are color coded by network, which helps. You should remember to note the color code used for your network shown on the initialization screen. There is no warning to do this in the manual, but it helps.

Having mentioned the manual, let me comment more fully on it. It is 19 pages long and reasonably clear. One annoying problem with it is that a terrible job was done in laying it out. There are labels misaligned from values they describe, and extra spacing thrown in between words in a willy-nilly fashion. This was not done for right-justification; the thing is printed with a ragged right margin. You could call this a small problem, but I wager

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that if you have ever played around with desk top publishing you will find this to be distracting as you read.

More annoying, more distracting for me, is the inclusion in the manual of over 20 mistakes in spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc. What is the world coming to? (Mrs. Scanlon asked me that in eighth grade, long, long ago. I still don't know, but I have started to talk like Mrs. Scanlon.) A magazine editor recently sent me a four page letter detailing how important spelling is, among other things, and he had several errors in his own document!

He told me that my hard work would be "appriciated" before going on to note that, "Spelling is awful. This must stop. You are responsible for spellchecking (sic) your document. Errors are often missed and find there way to publication. A magazine can die due to these errors." (Emphasis added.) Amen. A spell checker will *not* catch the misuse of "there" for "their," but if he used one, it sure let "appriciated" get by.

Spell checkers are not proofreaders. The manual that comes with Prime Time was either not proofread, or done so in a slipshod manner. Nor was the document spell checked. Lack of quality in written material bothers me. End of sermon.

Last comment on the manual: It betrays a British origin for the game as it includes the following words: pub, programme, amongst, and surprized. I read all the fine print, but could find no reference to any firm other than the one from King of Prussia, PA.

Let's get back to the game. There are two factors built into this game that will keep you from becoming a super player too quickly and tossing it aside from boredom. First, in the crucial part of the decision making, you are timed. You must get all of your decisions made and executed within five minutes, or get severely penalized. The instructions point out that "time is money!" Second, randomness is involved. Viewer trends and tastes can be randomly affected. Other random factors include what can happen to you when you "do lunch." You may get a financial windfall or a penalty.

One thing that I wish they had done differently is to have created two computer player figures. The game uses Fred Silverfish for both networks that you play against. With 32K more, which they probably didn't have room for, they could have included a different name and face for the third network player. During the game, the face appears to relate to you, cartoon balloon fashion, what each of the competitor networks have done for the coming month. If you are studying them closely (I haven't yet), you might get confused by the same face.

I liked the use of sound in this game. There is not a lot, but you will be surprised by a voice now and then.

In the main part of the game, you are shown a desk top, with some papers, a telephone index, and phone. Also, a door leads to "Programming" and another is marked "Exit." You see a light switch, clock, and calendar on the wall. All of these can be used by pointing and clicking. This interface works very well.

Now we are at the time in the program where I tell you what I think about the game, overall. I like it. It includes strategy, but is not as fearsomely complicated as, say, Dungeon Master. There are no puzzles to solve. It will not make you tense up and sweat. There is no arcade action. It is different.

Is it worth its price? The answer to that is highly dependent on the individual. Obviously, I do not think it is one of the really great games of all time, such that I can give it an unqualified endorsement. Let me see if I can put it into a possibly helpful frame of reference for you.

I like it better than Bubble Ghost, President Elect, Balance of Power, and The Hunt for Red October. I like it less than Micro-League Baseball, Flight Simulator II, Dungeon Master, and Shanghai. I know that I would like it less than Earl Weaver Baseball and the Chuck Yeager flight game, but I have to be realistic, don't I? After all, I'm never going to get to play those games on this system. Grrrrr.

I hope that helped you to decide for yourself.

The disk comes wrapped and sealed in a software license agreement. Following directions, I read this before opening. It said that I could make one copy of the software for backup purposes. I couldn't. Unless you know something I don't know yet, you won't be able to either. The disk would not copy. The main program file could be copied, but then would not execute. The disk directory includes a folder or file that is shown in shadow outline and cannot be copied.

Frankly, folk at First Row, I don't give a damn if your software is protected or not. I do wish that your instructions could be clear and correct, however, so that I do not waste my precious time.

So, what do you think? Does Prime Time sound like your idea of a good time? Vote early; vote often.

Prime Time P.S. The September/October 1988 issue of Atari Explorer has two articles about Prime Time. The first is about Mike Breggar, the designer of Prime Time. It seems he is a podiatrist, as well as a programmer, and he is from Philadelphia. So much for my speculation of possible British origins of the game.

The second article is a review. The Atari Explorer reviewer liked this more than I did. On a scale of ten, it received ratings of 8 for ease of learning, 9 for challenge, 7 for graphics, 10 for documentation, and 9 overall. While I must say that I liked Prime Time, these ratings appear a bit generous to me.

The game is easy to learn, and merits the 8 rating for this factor. I am one of the poorest game players around, and I do not rate the challenge at 9. It would seem more like 7 or 8 to me. For graphics, 6 might be more appropriate. There are few pictures, and little animation. As for documentation, the game is easy to learn, so the documentation would have to be terrible to get a low score. Given the errors, I rate it at 6. Overall, I would say 6 or maybe 7.

There you have it: my view, which may be that of a hard marker, and the scores of another who may be an easier grader. I hope this was helpful.

Flying The ST

by Allen P. Bargen (c)

commentary on the World of Atari ST computers

Submitted on behalf of MACE

A farewell to friends...

"The time has come the Walrus said, to talk of many things..."

With those few words from "The Walrus and the Carpenter", I must tell you that this will be my final column for the MAM newsletter.

I shall soon be leaving the Windsor area and will move to Toronto Ontario Canada to assume new responsibilities with my company.

Moving is always exciting and this one is no different. It has been ten years plus, since I moved to Windsor Ontario. During those years it has been my very great priveledge to have met many wondeful people. Certainly those whom I call friends will be sorely missed, and that is the downside of leaving.

Writing for MACE and MAM has always been a challenge looked forward to with anticipation and much energy. Being a long - long time Atari supporter has taught me that the greatest source of information and education is via these very means. I won't presume that anything I have written could ever be described as educational. Informative hopefully, and as timely as publishing deadlines will allow.

The need to ask people to contribute articles to publications such as this one is as urgent now as it ever was. Consider the lost soul, new computer at hand and a myriad of questions that beg answers. You and I have lived through most of these problems. It should be no real difficulty to provide your experiences to others by means of a few written words. This is your opportunity to do so.

.....True
Friends are the hardest to leave behind....

I hope that my leaving will not cause me to sever the many friendships that I have made, and will try to make sure that does not happen. I shall miss these golden opportunities to offer rhetoric to you, and with any luck, will still be able to write from time to time as circumstances permit. Toronto isn't that far away after all.

To all my many friends in MACE .. I wish you the greatest successes and continued good fortune. MACE has seen some tough times, and it is only through the dedication and dogged determination of a select few that the club continues on.

There is no reward in the work and sweat required to keep any volunteer organization alive, but it is vital to the life of the group, and we should thank those who toil for the benefit of us all.

Like most other things, names are not necessary. Working volunteers know who they are and so do you. The next time you get a chance, why not express your appreciation to them. It's the only thanks they get. Darn little pay for a lot of hours of work.

The dog days of summer seem to have passed - much to my chagrin and much too fast for my liking. The fall weather is here, and nature in it's own subtle way has started the leaves turning to their fall splendour once again.

Let the good times roll

The summer was certainly a good one for Atari ST owners. The virtual flood of software continued with an incredibly wide selection of titles from Europe. Those people continue their love affair with the ST, and are writing some mighty impressive stuff. So too the US with a ton of releases of software guaranteed to make your ST the envy of the block.

If you haven't dropped into your favourite Atari retailer recently, take a moment to do that and you will be pleasantly surprised with the warez on the shelves.

A few Titles to ponder...
Arkanoid II The Revenge of DOH, Barberian II, Battle for the Throne, Bionic Commando, BMX Racer, Dark Castle, Death Sword, Empire strikes Back, Gold of the Realm, Gauntlet II, Heroes of the Lance, Indian Mission, Illusion, Knightmare, Masters of the Universe, Mickey Mouse, Moon Patrol, Outrun, Obliterator, Paladin, Prime Time, Power Play, Phantasm, Quadralien, Questron II, Spider's Quest, Soccer Supremo, Speed Buggy, Shadowgate, Shoot the Moon, Summer Olympiad, Spitfire 40, Sidearms, Space Racer, Space Harrier, Skrull, Sidewinder, Thunder Cats, Vixen, War Hawk, Wizball, and a ton of others that I didn't have time to scan quickly.

This isn't a recommendation to buy these, just a fast list of some that I saw with potential entertainment value.

There are scores of Utilities as well. Hopefully someone will pick up the gauntlet and write about them in future issues.

For the moment, I wish you all well. It's been a slice writing about the ST for you.

Allen P. Bargen

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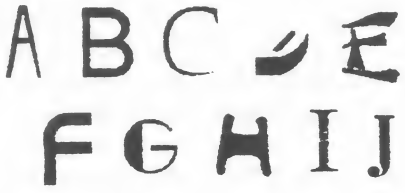

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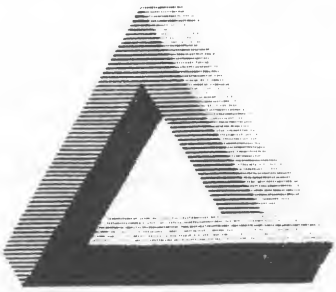

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A New Look at a Utility That's Indispensable, For Which No One Wants to Pay

by Donavan Vicha

Indulge me for a moment and consider the following quiz carefully:

1) On this well–known .TTP program, typing in the following commands performs which function: x, p, y, c, and o?

2) What is the technical difference between packing, crunching, and squeezing?

3) True or False: In Version 4.5, the convert command was changed to support use of a RAM disk.

4) Where do Little Green Footballs come from?

This is a trick quiz, I make no bones about it. There's a bonus score for those who have guessed the identity of the program, and extra points for finding the tricky parts. Answers will appear elsewhere in this article––okay, like, here they are!

Answers to Trick Quiz:

1) x=extract files, p="copy files from archive to standard output" (Yes! That means print!), y=(this was a tricky part, not a command [Did I get you to look through the docs?]), c="convert entry to new packing method," and o="overwrite existing files when extracting" ––1 point each for the commands, 2 points for the trick, 5 points for trick if you didn't have to look it up, 20 points if you guessed the name of the program without looking at the other questions.

(At this point in this ridiculous exercise, I am assuming you don't know what I'm talking about, or you're wondering if you've wild–guessed correctly, or you're dead right and feeling appropriately gleeful over it.) The next question should have been the giveaway, but there are still points to be gained by proper answers:

2) Packing collapses runs of repeated byte values, Crunching employs the Lempel–Zev (you must have the name to get the points scored) compression technique, and Squeezing employs the Huffman encoding compression technique. Bonuses: 10 points for guessing the name of the program after reading this question and those are a gift. 5 points each for actually knowing something close to fitting my answers, and for a bonus, 10 points each for knowing average percentages of packing success per method.

3) True. 1 point and 2 points for guessing the name of the program.

(To anyone who has not ***yet*** *guessed the name of the program, bear with me a little longer. All work and no play makes Donnie a little crazed ...)* We come now to the last question, a low–down trick question that was meant to give any puzzled reader a better clue to the mystery I've attempted to create.

4) In California, 2 points; Pacific Palisades, 5 more points. If you identified this as a trick question because it clearly refers to a different, albeit intimately related, program, you've already awarded yourself enough points, but I'll award 5 for knowing the name of the other program.

Tally up your scores. Here's the ratings as I call 'em:

0 You only do WHAT with your computer?!

1–17 I bet you get most of your extraneous programs from magazines with slick paper, right?

18–58 A documentation freak, right? Did you contribute? (And to whom did you contribute?)

59–87 You cheated!

88 The max. You've written an ARC program, haven't you?

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Okay. I really put you through this to score some points about the main subject of this month's column, the ARC.TTP utility that is used by more PC users than any other program in any market. Some have estimated that 50,000 people alone use ARC on the ST, but hundreds of thousands use it on Apples and IBMs as well. It is most likely the most compatible piece of software code that can also be used on almost any computer. Yes, you can download an arced Amiga or Macintosh file and de–arc it with ARC.TTP. (I don't guarantee that the file will be usable on your ST, but the file will retain its integrity of code.) *And it is not a commercial product, i is shareware*. As an individual consumer who uses the ST, you may decide the amount of your contribution. As a commercial user or distributor of ARC.TTP (a.k.a. ARC521.TTP in its most–recent version), System Enhancement Associates, Inc., expects $35 for commercial site licensing for up to 9 machines (that's $35 per site) and then goes on a scale downward in price per site.

ARC.TTP allows you to store files using less storage space than it

presently takes up, generally saving from 20% to 60% of the original size. Most programs are glad to just leave you with a file that can be loaded back into it for whatever is its main purpose. And for most end users, the size of any particular file is of no huge concern. But when a lot of files start to fill up the magnetic receptacle of his or her choice, then file size becomes a concern. Get another receptacle or--hey, there's this program that can knock off 40% of the size of each of those files--use ARC.TTP. One can easily understand why this piece of software code is the closest thing to a standard for all computers than anything else.

There is another aspect of trickiness to my little quiz besides the "y command" and the reference to ArcShell put out by Charles F. Johnson's Little Green Footballs, and that's the fact that there are a lot of what seem to be variations on the ARC.TTP theme out there on the nets and on various magazine disks that use the utility to provide more files than can normally be fitted (sic) to a disk. I have used some of them, although for the most part, I've used some version of ArcShell with an ARC.TTP file that I believe was ported by one Harvey Johnson (no relation to C.F.). Only recently have I seen some truly thorough docs for these two programs and, if only because Systems Enhancement Associates (SEA) has produced such impressive documentation (and for all I know, having received no answer to a letter I sent to him in early May, SEA may be Harvey Johnson; he is not listed in the Credits section of SEA's docs though), I tend to think credit is due them. ArcShell has always been well-identified, but the last few months have seen it become a shareware program with thorough documentation of its own as well as making the 5.20 Arc docs available.

Used together, these programs serve a great need (optimizing storage) for a wide variety of users. ARC.TTP can stand alone and do the job, but as you can see from question #1, it requires memorizing commands and typing them out. In the case of the ST, you initially have to install the TOS Take Parameters function under your GEM desktop's Options menu (Install Program), then upon running the program, type in those commands and path- and filenames in order to work with it. Cumbersome when compared to the point and click process of handling TOS and PRG files. That's where ArcShell comes in, delivering a mouse-oriented command board for taking advantage of the full power of ARC.TTP.

The work of Charles F. Johnson, a writer for *ST Log* and co-author of *G+PLUS*, ArcShell has blossomed in a truly powerful command shell that handles ARC.TTP superbly and adds many significant disk management features unique to the ST users' needs in terms of utter ease of use. Because enough people encouraged him with suggestions (not donations, unfortunately) he continued to improve the program and let us all use it free of charge until it reached a stage of maturity that it is only right that he now request a specific donation of $15 (or more). This is the embodiment of the shareware concept, and also an excellent marketing strategy: make it so addictive, it's impossible to live without it.

ArcShell is not addictive in the same sense as *Dungeon Master* is addictive. Withdrawal from *DM* could conceivably be difficult, but consider what withdrawal from using ARC.TTP would be:

- No more downloading arced files.
- No more PD or magazine disks with arced files.

Pretty grim. This addiction should not be overcome, but contributions to the appropriate authors is now in order for making these programs available and so easy to use.

ArcShell opens to a button box that allows you to choose any of the ARC.TTP commands with a button (e.g., Extract, Add, Run from Arc, Update or Freshen, etc.) and to set paths for Data and Arc files. This pathway setup is among the more recent achievements in ArcShell and most-welcome of them since Arc does require temporary disk space dependent on the size of the unarced files. ArcShell used from a hard drive or RAM disk is an absolute dream.

There is a form included in the docs for Arc5.21 for sending in your contribution. Don't be intimidated by the "site license fees" information unless you are a commercial user, as a noncommercial user, you can send in whatever amount of money you can afford. I have no idea of what you may receive from SEA for your donation, but I urge you to be true to the shareware concept. As for Charles F. Johnson, he is asking for $15 from any user who is addicted to the ease of use he provides in using ARC.TTP and he deserves it. His address is in his docs, but I provide it here because those of you who use ArcShell may not need to read the docs in order to use it. Send your check to **Charles F. Johnson, P.O. Box 1250, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272**, and tell him *Michigan Atari Magazine* made you do it.

COMPUSCRIBE is the name for the Editorial and Design Services provided by Donavan Vicha, 7044 North Rockwell, Chicago 60645. If you need help in writing, editing, and producing professional documentation for your software, please send an introductory letter and I'll be glad to work with you for a reasonable fee.

Graphics Utilities from Irata Verlag for the 8bit: The Editor, Video Meister and Super Label 2

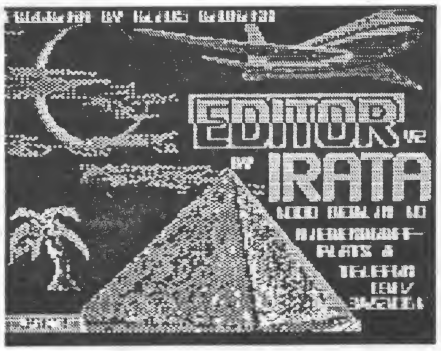
by Bob Retelle

This has been a very difficult review to write. The programs reviewed here have obviously had a lot of work put into creating them, but they suffer from some unfortunate hindrances.

Irata Verlag is a German company which has been producing software for Atari computers for some years and, as we've seen, especially in the ST world, some of the best software has been coming from Germany. Unfortunately, the language barrier is something which stands in the way of these particular programs. All the menus and prompts are in German, and the documentation, while translated into English, is still very unclear in many areas. I feel that a program which is to be marketed in a particular country ought to be re-written in the language of that country, whether it be French, German, English, or whatever. Even a few minutes with a disk sector editor to change the menu selections directly on the disk would have been a great help!

The first of the three software packages is the "Editor V.2." This program will let you load a picture file and modify it in several ways. You can't draw a new picture or make drawing changes with the Editor, so it works as an accessory to a drawing program such as "Micropainter," or Atari's "Paint" program. The Editor will let you add text to a picture using loadable fonts, cut out sections, move them to new locations and "paste" them in place, and save sections to disk. You can flip the blocks both horizontally and vertically, and inverse the colors. When you've finished creating the final picture, you can save it back to disk, and print it out in several different sizes.

The Editor uses an "icon" menu for selecting its main functions which helps a lot with the language barrier, but once an icon is selected, all the prompts are in German. One of the most noticeable differences is the need to hit "J" (Ja, in German) for "Yes." Once you get used to these differences, and have figured out what the prompts are asking for it's not too bad, but it's still very awkward. Many of the prompts will let you escape back to the main menu by pressing "*" or the ESC key, but there were times I found myself trapped in a function with no choice but to load a picture or re-boot the program.



There were a few more serious drawbacks to using the Editor, the first of which is that it will only load Micropainter format pictures. You can't load in Koala compressed format .PIC files which in my experience make up the large majority of available pictures. (There is a function in another of the programs in this series which will let you convert Koala format to Micropainter format for use with the Editor, as an extra step.) When adding text to the pictures, there is no easy way to erase mistakes other than by going over the mistake pixel by pixel. Finally, while the menu and documentation indicate the program is set up for Epson printers, it doesn't say which Epson model. My Epson MX-80 printed out nothing but garbage, while my Panasonic 1092i (which emulates an Epson FX-80) printed just fine. There is a menu option to create a printer configuration file for other types of printers, but I wasn't able to figure out from the documentation what data was needed for this to work properly.

Also on the Editor disk are three other related graphics utilities. The first is called "Pic-Mix," and will allow you to load in two pictures, one on top of the other, then save or print the results. The version on the Editor disk only works in Graphics 9 mode, even though the Editor works in Graphics 8 mode. The method of loading a picture is a little confusing and takes some getting used to. The Load option on the menu doesn't do anything by itself, but only works after you've used the Directory option to step through the contents of a disk and select the picture you want to load. When you get back to the menu, then L will load the selected picture into memory. It works, but staring at that German menu wondering why pressing L just makes a keyclick sound can be awfully frustrating until you figure it out!

The other two programs on the Editor disk are utilities to convert PrintShop icons and "Screen Magic" pictures into Micropainter format for use with the Editor. These work well, and I found the Directory functions in them worked much more logically than in the other programs.

The next set of programs from Irata Verlag is called "Video Meister," and is intended to be used to enhance pictures created with the ComputerEyes Video Digitizer. Again, the menu is in German. The documentation provides a translation of the menu items, but doesn't go into any detail about what the functions do. You can adjust aspects of the picture such as brightness and contrast and set the graphics mode. Unfortunately, while I have some Graphics 9 digitized photo files, I was never able to figure out how to Load a picture into this program. The "Load Picture" option described in the documentation was missing from the screen menu, and there didn't seem to be any other way to do it! Thus, I was never able to test this program.

Included on the Video Meister disk is a different version of the "PicMix" utility. This one includes some options to modify the appearance of the pictures, again in Graphics 9 only. You can change the contrast and brightness, inverse the entire picture, and set the colors. There is also an interesting option to "soften" the picture, much like a "soft-focus" lens on a camera. This utility doesn't let you print the picture directly, but you can save it to disk, and use the other program on the Video Meister disk which is a printing utility. This one will load in pictures in either Graphics 8 0r 9 modes, and then you are offered several different printout sizes to choose from, and the ability to inverse the picture before printing. Once again, I couldn't use my Epson printer, but the program worked fine with the Panasonic.

The last of the three program disks is "Super Label 2." Of the three programs tested, this is the only one which wouldn't run on my 48K 800. It seems to need the extra memory of an XL or XE. This one shows some very nice touches, like a multi-color Graphics 0 main menu. It allows loading in Micropainter, Koala or PrintShop Screen Magic formats, and there's also an option to load 62 contiguous sectors directly from a disk, without specifying a filename. (My guess on this last loading option is that it would let you load in a picture from a boot disk, like a game title screen, but the documentation was very unclear.)

Once you've loaded a picture in any of these formats, you can save it back out to disk in Micropainter format, so it can be used with the Editor V.2 program. There's an option to load in a custom font and use it to add titles to the picture you've loaded, or you can just work with a blank screen to create text-only labels. (I never did find a way to erase a picture, once loaded, without re-booting the program.) I assume the labels on the disks were printed using Super Label, but I may never know, because when it came time to print out my masterpiece, the program wouldn't work with EITHER of my printers! Again, the documentation indicates the program is set up for "Epson" printers, but the output had no line feeds in it, and the entire label printed on one line.

There are some nice features in these programs, but based on my experiences, I wouldn't be able to recommend them to anyone until English language versions are released, more complete documentation is included and the compatibility with different printers is improved.

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Spy Vs. Spy I & II

by Bethany Rayl

Spy Vs. Spy I

Spy vs. Spy places you in the role of either the black or white agent, as created by Antonio Prohias in Mad Magazine in 1960.

This is a very challenging and action packed strategy game. Your mission is to locate four objects, find the exit, and board your plane before time runs out. You must locate a passport, travelling money, a key, and secret plans.

To accomplish this, you travel through various rooms and search different items of furniture while the other spy is hot on your trail. If the other spy enters a room where you are, both of you drop the items you have accumulated and you can either run away or can engage in hand-to-hand combat.

Along the way, you can set traps to foil your unsuspecting opponent. Watch your step, though, for he can do the same to you. The traps are easy to set and fun to use. They include: a bomb, a spring, a water bucket (for electrocution), a gun with a string, and a time bomb.

Spy vs. Spy has clear, concise graphics. The game uses a split-screen display which the author has termed Simulvision. In Simulvision, you can keep an eye on your opponent's movements at all times. Another new feature is called Simulplay, which allows two players to participate at the same time.

The only thing I don't like about this game is that you have no strength indicator. This can be quite annoying when you engage in combat, for you never know how badly you are hurt until you are dead. When you die, you are resurrected until your time runs out. Each time you die, though, you lose a certain amount of time.

Overall, I think this game is well worth the money and highly recommend it. If you are looking for a fast paced game that forces you to use your brains as well as your motor skills, then this is the game for you.

Spy Vs Spy II

Spy vs. Spy II, The Island Caper, is the sequel to the original. As in the first one, you must choose whether to be the white or black spy. Your mission in this game is to find and assemble three parts of a top secret missile and deliver it to your submarine before the island volcano erupts. The catch in this game is that, along with the traps that can be set, there are natural hazards on the island that can slow you down.

Advantage currently sells Spy Vs. Spy I & II together....if you don't have the original, it's well worth the price. If you do have Spy Vs. Spy I, my advice is don't waste your money.

On the island or in the surrounding water, you can fall into quicksand, can drown in the water, or can be eaten by sharks. As in the original, you are given a number of traps that you are able to set. In this game the traps include: snares, open pits, punji pits (pits with stakes at the bottom), napalm, and coconut gasoline bombs.

I thought the concept of this game was really good, but there is one major flaw that I could not overlook. The screen contains too many whites and blacks making up the background. This becomes confusing when you cannot tell your spy from the scenery. The flaw becomes especially apparent when the white spy stands in front of a rock and becomes almost invisible. After a while, it becomes annoying when you are playing along and your spy seemingly disappears.

Another aspect which I find annoying is that you are only given one life. When you die, you can only sit and watch as your opponent finds the missile and boards his submarine.

Overall, I didn't feel this was a very successful sequel to the original. Given some more work, this could become an interesting and enjoyable game, but it seems as if the author was more worried about getting the product out to the public than he was about writing a good program.

I did like the fact that the author added a strength indicator this time. My favorite part of this version was the title screen, it looked as if more time and energy were invested into it then the rest of the game.

Advantage currently sells Spy vs. Spy I and II together as a package. If you don't have the original game, then it is well worth the price. If you do have the original, my advice is don't waste the money.

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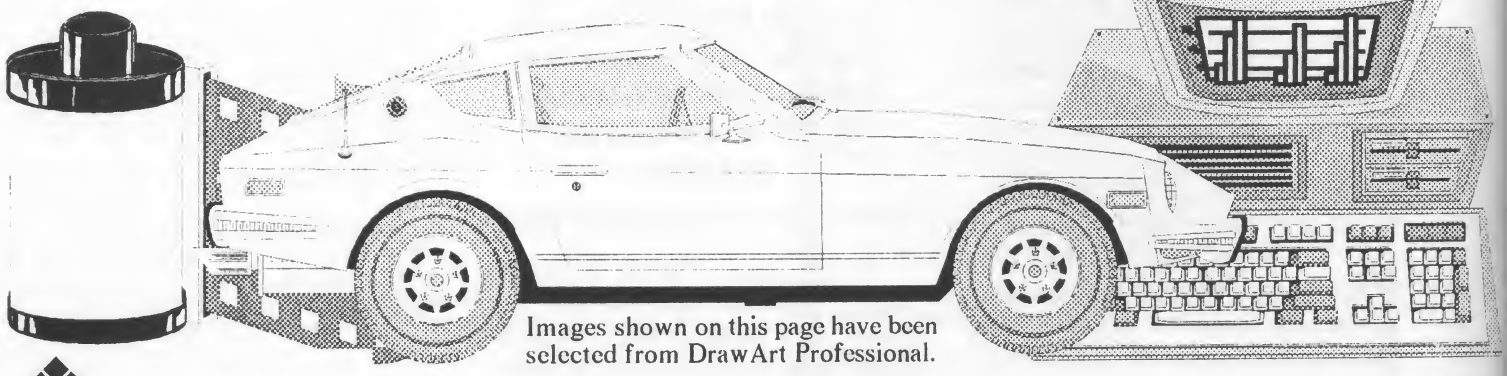

Images shown on this page have been selected from DrawArt Professional.

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Golf Simulations for the Atari ST

by Scott Dzienis (MACE)

I am an avid fan of computerized golf simulations. This is probably because I don't get out to the course as much as I would like to. This review will concentrate on what I consider the two best golf simulations. They are Access's Leader Board and Accolade's Mean-18.

Leader Board

Leader Board is my favorite Atari ST game. The graphics are sharp and clear from the initial scoreboard to the actual playing window. The game is started by inserting a key device into joystick #1 slot and then autobooting the program disk.

I really dislike this key device, especially when I have to physically lift my 1040ST to get at the joystick #1 port and then try to insert this device. It is kind of like trying to pull a tooth when all you have is a doorknob and a piece of string. This copy protection does allow you to make a copy of the program without any using any special techniques but you still need the key.

Once started, you are prompted for the number of players and skill levels. You also select the number of holes to be played and the courses. One drawback is there is no nationally known courses on the program disk or the optionally available tournament disk. The only available courses are the Access supplied and designed courses which are still very challenging.

The playing window offers an adequate amount of options and status indicators including hole number, par, player name, time, power/hitting indicator, and windage indicator which is used in advanced skill levels. The mouse controls club selection, aiming, and hitting. The view of the hole is from behind the golfer and offers a spectacular view of trees, sand traps, fairway, rough, and background setting.

Putting is also controlled with the mouse. A slope indicatator is also on the screen. The view is over the shoulder of the golfer and when the putt is initiated it is very realistic. Also included on the program is a driving range for practice. The tournament disk with extra courses is available separately.

Mean-18

The other golf simulation is Accolade's Mean-18. I also have this package for my IBM which I have been playing for years. Noteworthy is the superior graphics of this game on the Atari ST. This is in comparison to the EGA version on the IBM which is somewhat undesirable at times.

The Accolade version comes with a program and a course disk. The program disk comes with the Mean-18 game program, course architect program, and one golf course. The architect program can modify a course or you can create your own. This program is copy protected and therefore backups cannot be made. The course disk contains three nationally known courses including Pebble Beach, St. Andrews, and Augusta.

After Mean-18 is booted, the first screen consists of the Mean-18 logo and a cute, animated gopher sequence. From here we go to the player and course selection process, and the play options including putting green, driving range, play a hole, or start the game. The next screen is an overhead view of the hole and then move to the actual play window. The play window has several mouse driven options at the bottom which include club selection, score sheet, overhead view, or aiming your shot.

The left hand side of the screen has the power/hitting column which is mouse controlled and controls your shots. The view of the hole is very good (not quite as good as Leader Board's) with trees, water, sand traps, fairway, rough, etc. Play is fairly simple and very good.

Putting is performed from an overhead view using the mouse to aim your shots. The putting is not quite as good as Leader Board's but is challenging and fun. The real asset to this program is the course architect. This is a full feature program in itself. It is an easy to use mouse driven paint program which can modify greens, fairways, trees, water, etc. A real pleasure to use.

Another amazing part of this program is that it will accept all the additional course volumes #2,#3,#4, for the IBM. Accolade does not market it this way and does not offer additional disks for the Atari ST.

All that has to be done is to copy them from the 5.25" disks to the 3.5" disks. Also all the courses I designed using the IBM version also work on the Atari ST version. I have since put my IBM version into the closet.

I recommend both of these packages for the Atari ST. They will provide hours of entertainment especially when the real clubs are put away for the winter.

RS232 Null Modem and Monitor Cable

by Don Neff (MACE, WAUG)

This easy project gives you two new tools; a Null Modem for file transfers between two computers, and an RS232 Signal Monitor.

The null modem allows you transfer files between any two computers without having to buy a second modem. The two computers can use any terminal programs, as long as they share a common transfer protocal (i.e. XMODEM, ASCII, etc.). The RS232 signal monitor gives you a visual indication of the data flow in the most important wires in your modem cable.

RS232 Ports

The original EIA (Electronic Industries Association) RS232 standard has been modified at the whim of modem manufacturers so much, that today the only standard left is pins #1 and #7 are both grounded. Most "Hayes Compatible" modems have similar pin connections, but even they have differences from Hayes (the only true Hayes compatible is another Hayes).

The most common difference seems to be a reversal of the RTS and CTS pins and the handling of the CD line. These differences are the reason you need to buy special cables for some RS232 devices (R$232 ?). The following table shows the original EIA RS232 standard pin designations.

RS232 Standard for DB25 Pin

#	SIGNAL
1	Shield Ground
2	Transmit Data
3	Receive Data
4	Request to send
5	Clear to send
6	Data Set Ready
7	Signal Ground
8	Carrier Detect
9	+Voltage
10	-Voltage
11	not defined
12	2nd Carrier Detect
13	2nd Clear to send
14	2nd Transmit Data
15	DCE Transmit Timing
16	2nd Receive Data
17	Receive timing
18	not defined
19	2nd Request to send
20	Data Terminal Ready
21	Quality Detector
22	Ring Indicator
23	Rate Selector
24	DTE Transmit timing
25	not defined

Most of the lines shown in the table above are not used in the standard PC modems which we use on our Ataris. The eight two-color LEDs in the signal monitor are connected to the lines which are important to us.

The Null Modem

Switch SW1 in Figure 1 changes the signal monitor to a null modem by reversing the connections between pins #2 and #3. All of the other 23 pins are connected pin-for-pin between the two DB25 connectors. This is all that is needed to get your ST to talk to your 8-bit Atari 850 interface without a modem between them. This simple approach will not work with the few peripherals which also require the reversal of pins #5 and #6, etc.

Building the Circuit

As usual in my articles, the Radio Shack part number of each item is listed after the first mention of the item in these assembly instructions. Plan your work carefully so you can keep the leads and wires short. This will reduce the possiblity of them touching each other and causing problems.

The male (276-1547) and female (276-1548) DB25 connectors can be mounted on opposite sides of a small box (270-283). Use 22 gage wire (278-1307) to connect all the pins (except #2 and #3) from the male DB25 connector to the matching number pin on the female DB25 connector (i.e. pin #1 to pin #1). All of the pins are numbered with tiny letters imprinted in the mounting plastic of the connector so you can match them up easily.

SW1 (276-614) should be wired as shown in Figure 1. The wires from pins #2 and #3 of the female DB25 connector are soldered to the two center pins (C and D) of SW1. The wires from pins #2 and #3 of the male DB25 connector are soldered to the two pins (A and B) on one end of SW1. It doesn't matter which end of the switch you choose but, both wires must go to the same end.

Solder a short jumper from each one of these end pins to the pin diagonally opposite of it at the other end of SW1 (connect A to F, connect B to E). Select a location in the box for mounting the switch and drill a 1/4 inch hole for it. Insert the printed circuit board in the box and mark the area of the board which will interfere with the switch. Remove the board and mount the switch in place. Cut the marked area off of the printed circuit

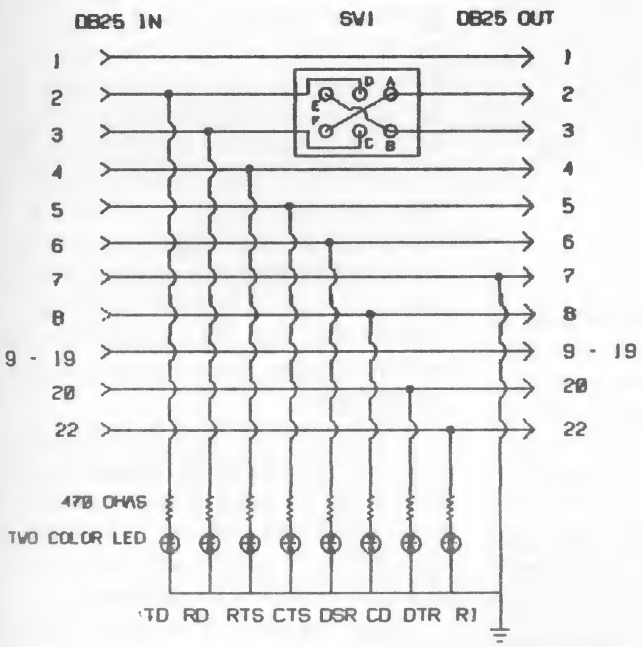


Figure One

board to allow it to clear the switch. The eight 470 ohm resistors (271-1317) and the eight two-color LEDs (276-025) should be connected in pairs, as in Figure 1. Notice that one lead of each LED is longer than its partner. Solder a resistor to the shorter of the two leads on each LED. Mount the resistor and LED assemblies on the circuit board. Connect all the long leads of the LEDs together and solder one end of a short wire to them. Solder the other end of the wire to pin #7 on one of the DB25 connectors.

Solder the free lead of the first resistor to pin #2 of the female DB25 connector. Solder the free end of the next resistor to pin #3 of the female DB25 connector. Continue this proccess for the remaining resistors, connecting them to pins #4,5,6,8,20, and 22 of the DB25 connector. Mount the finished circuit board in the case and check all your wires to make sure that no shorts can occur. Measure the relative positions of the LEDs and drill holes in the cover of the box to accomodate them. Install the cover on the box with the LEDs sticking through the holes you drilled for them. Label the LEDs as shown below.

LED LABEL
1 TD
2 RD
3 RTS
4 CTS
5 DSR
6 CD
7 DTR
8 RI

Testing the Monitor

Plug your modem cable into your new signal monitor box and plug the box into your modem. Use your favorite terminal program to dial a BBS. If your modem works as normal, you can label the present position of SW1 as the signal monitor setting. Label the other position as the null modem setting. If your modem didn't work as normal, flip SW1 to its other position and try again. If your modem still doesn't work correctly, disassemble the signal monitor box and recheck all your work.

Connecting the Null Modem

I use the null modem to transfer text files from an XE to an ST by connecting the modem cable of each computer to the null modem box. However, this requires a Gender Changer on the XE side because both modem cables have male connectors and the box has only one female connector. If you don't have a gender changer, you don't have to buy one. You can install another female DB25 connector as a third connector on the box and wire it pin-for-pin to the male connector. That is the least expensive choice. You can also make a gender changer by soldering two female DB25 plugs back-to-back. This is the most versatile choice since you can use it in other applications too.

Using the Null Modem

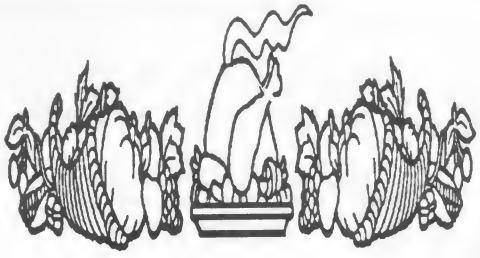
I use Flash on the ST and 850 Express! on the XE, setting both for 8 data bits, 1 stop, no parity, half duplex. Don't try to dial a number, instead, when both terminal programs are set up, force terminal mode on 850 Express! to get the two computers talking.

To send a file from the 8bit, use option "S" (Send Xmodem) from the Express! menu and give the name of the file to be sent to the ST. The 8bit will then sit and wait for a signal from the ST before it begins to transmit. Select "Download Xmodem" from the Flash menu, and give the name of the file for storage on the ST disk. Click on "OK" and your computers will start communicating with each other.

Text files aren't all you'll want to transfer from your 8bit to your ST. Eightbit Printshop icons and Koala Pictures can be transported and converted for use on your ST. Data files for some 8bit data bases can be used in similar ST programs with little or no conversion needed. Even your favorite music files can be converted to ST format.

If you use PC Ditto you'll be able to use the null modem to transport files from an IBM with a hard drive to your ST hard drive. That's a lot cheaper than buying a 5 1/4 IB Drive (we'll be building an IB Drive clone in a future article).

Have a pleasant Thanksgiving Holiday!



The Wico Ergostick

by Jim Tuma (GAG)

The Wico Ergostick, which looks quite similiar to the Epyx 500XJ, has a large curved hard rubber handgrip designed to fit in the palm of your left hand. The finger next to your left thumb extends to a fire button on the right underside of the grip. The stick itself is on top of the grip and is grasped in the right hand. A thumbrest is provided for the left thumb on the side of the grip. The feel of the grip is very solid and the stick appears to be of excellent construction, far beyond the flimsy Atari joystick. Moving the stick activates a switch resulting in an audible click. Moving the stick diagonally activates two switches, with two clicks. Pressing the fire button also results in a click. All this clicking can be annoying, but it does provide audible feedback

Price-wise, a recent visit to Toys R Us found the Ergostick selling for $24, the Epyx 500XJ for $17, and a no-brand Atari-style stick for $7. Well, enough details, how does it do in game play? Here, I have mixed feelings. My usual joystick is the Suncomm Starfighter, a better designed version of the Atari stick, so all comparisons will be with it. I should mention the Ergostick is far preferable to the original Atari stick.

I tried the stick with two kinds of games, one requiring a lot of pushing of the fire button, and the other requiring more movement of the stick. Examples of the first group include Zaxxon and River Raid, the latter Pacman. (Accuse me of being behind the times in game play, but these are old favorites I enjoy.) The Ergostick requires more effort to press the fire button than the Starfighter, which gives a more solid feel but can increase reaction time. Also, the fire button seems to have a longer throw, so it had to be moved farther.

Movement of the stick had to be very precise for the playing of Pacman, as the game doesn't respond to diagonal movements of the stick. This can be a problem initially, but I quickly got used to it. However, I still think it slowed play.

Again, the stick has a longer throw than the Starfighter, which does tend to increase reaction time. In short, the Wico Ergostick is a very well designed, solidly constructed joystick, with a few minor shortcomings, largely attributable to my personal preferences.

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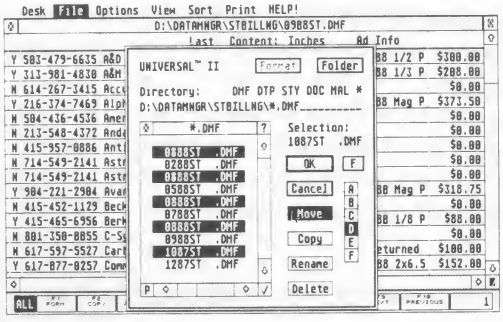

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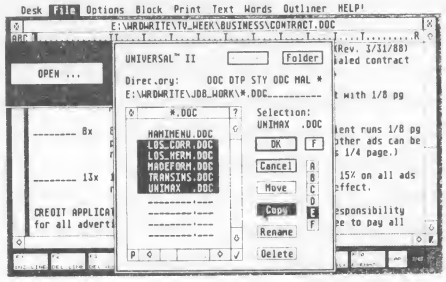

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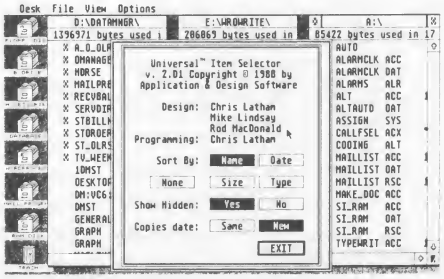

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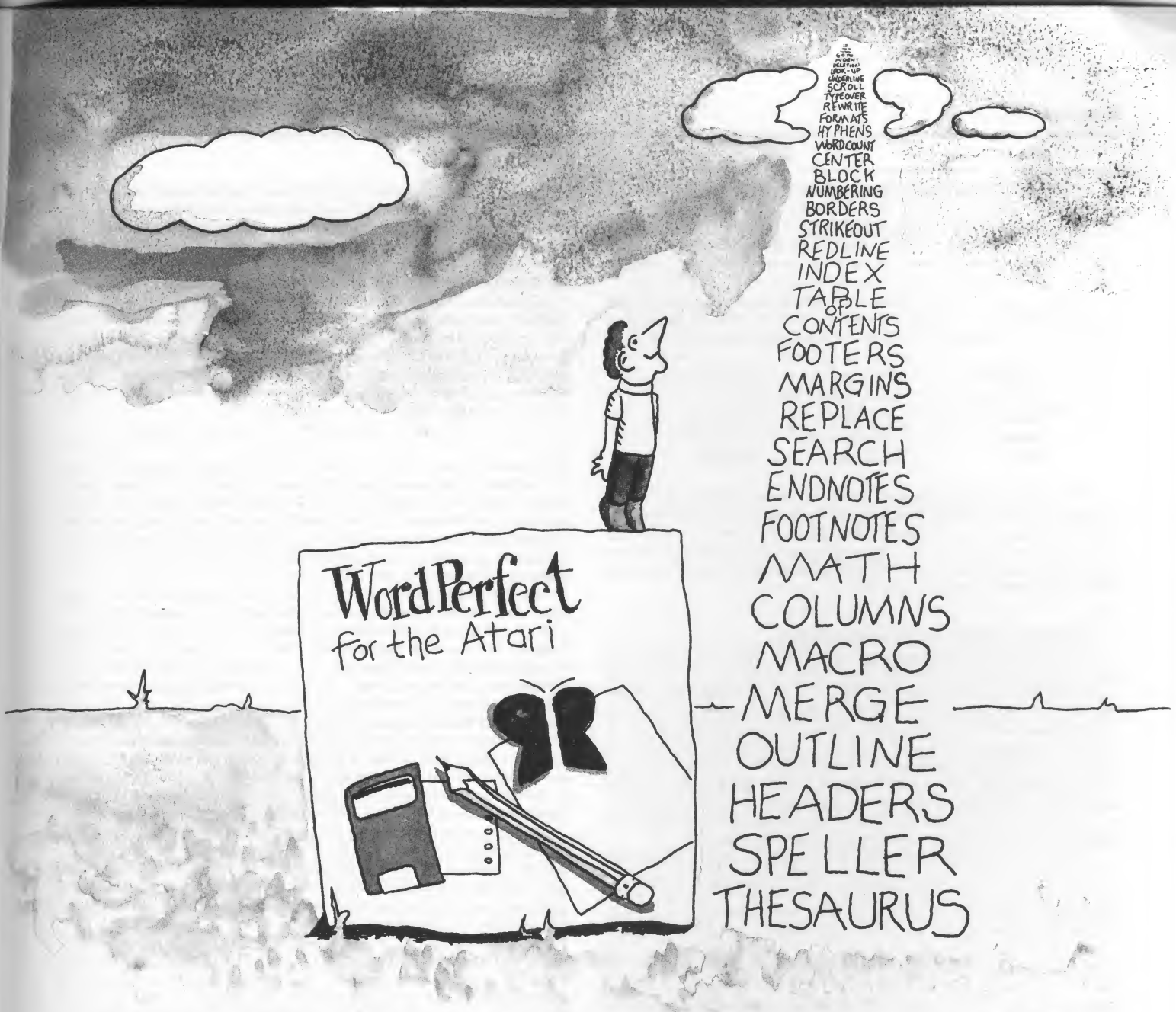

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Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

CACE

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
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The current membership dues are $10.00 per year, or $14.20 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204.

Editorial Opinion by Jimmie Boyce

To attempt to quote a famous English gentleman, "Never has so much been done by so few". I will start with that quote and in due time you will see why. A couple of weeks ago the general public was asked to participate is the Jackson "Say No To Drugs" program held at the Westwood Mall. Over all it was pathetic. That in no way demeans the participants, for they did an outstanding job and all deserve a standing ovation for what they did. The parents and the kids were there and they had questions. The pitiful few who really cared about their community did an outstanding job. What I want to know is -- where were the schools like the Jackson Area Career Center, and the rest of the Jackson Public School system, you had the most to contribute. What about the churches in the community? Oh yes and what about the service clubs? There were not many there.

Now that I have kicked a few people in the seat of the pants, I shall proceed to the general membership of CACE. We have over fifty paid members in this club. Only four people participated at the club booth at the Jackson "Say No To Drugs" event. The four know who they are. They worked from 8 a.m. until 9 p.m. each day of the event and had a good time. Some people, like Tom Pritchard, were at other booths but did give us support when it was needed. Thanks Tom -- your support was greatly appreciated and the knowledge that you were there working just as hard at your booth as those few at the CACE booth gives me great pride in knowing you. Many were not called because it was a long distance call. That left about twenty others that were called and of those twenty, five were participating, to the fifteen that had more important things to do than help keep drugs out of Jackson, all I can say I hope and pray that if one of yours (or someone you know) stays off drugs because of what the few did because you were too busy, that you will at least stop and say "thanks" but I doubt it because you will be too busy.

Let me thank Tony Bengel and the Jackson Commodore Computer Club for inviting CACE to participate with them and giving up their valuable table space. I wish we had had the membership turn out they had.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

All right it's time to get those fingers going, as column time is upon me again.

Oh yes, last month I gave a few words about how I felt about Antic, well it seems that Antic has decided to clean up its act a bit. They have decided that the square binding would be better than the staples they had been using for the summer (supposedly for just the summer), they have also said that they would be kicking most of their ST coverage out so that more 8bit material could be covered. Well, all that I can say is wait and see. One more thing on a more personal and positive note, Antic did publish a letter that I sent to them.

MAM has asked the president and the newsletter editor (also any other interested officers) of each of the contributing clubs come and meet with them towards the end of October to discuss the magazine. I figure that this is a perfect time to ask the membership to send me any comments of criticism that they have about the magazine to me, so that I can present it to MAM. Send any correspondence to me at the Post Office Box or if you would prefer to call me do so before 3:30 on weekdays, or just about any time on the weekend.

As fall is approaching I would like to see an increase in membership participation at the monthly meetings, I mean hey does anyone really watch the Lions lose anymore? Just remember that food and beer is available. Before I forget, I'd like to commend the Jackson Commodore Computer Club on the job they have been doing to improve access to the meeting room, my only regret is that I am unable to attend any of their meeting to thank them personally.

On one last note (yes I'm finally finishing this) I'd like to point out an interesting bit of advertising that I had seen recently in ANALOG. It seems that on page eight Computer Repeats is offering an XE Game System for $29 if you send them your 130XE and 1050 disk drive. Come on Computer Repeats, do you really think that Atari computer enthusiasts are dumb enough to send a computer and a disk drive so that they can get a computer that is less powerful and not have a disk drive to use anymore?

Well until next month when I write to you. See you at the meeting.

To start off this month, I have some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that in the forseeable future The Musician's Warehouse will not be supporting us good Atarians. It may be a possibility when they get back on their feet. The good news is that Kay Bee Toys in the Westwood Mall is supporting our local Atari community, by carrying XE game machines and Atari cartridges (not computer support but at least it is a start).

I strongly urge the club members to read Tim Sharpe's article. He has brought up some very interesting points that the officers will do well to heed. I believe that most of what we have written has been based on our frustrations of not getting feedback from the club members. Remember, this is your club: give us some thought on how you want things run. Come on people, we really aren't telepathic. All that we ask is that you let us know what you are thinking. If you would like something printed in the newsletter, all you have to do is get it to us. We accept submissions in written, magnetic, typed, or transmitted form. All this means is you can give Craig or myself whatever you would like put in the newsletter. Give it to us at the meeting, give us a call if you have a modem and send us a file, or send your submission to the post office box. If you have a rebuttal to anything you read or just have comments, negative or positive, please let us know we'd be happy to publish anything you have to say. Also we will just read it if you prefer.

If you have the chance, check out the article in the November issue of Analog, on the built-in stereo features of your 8bit computer. Lee Brilliant, in his Bits 'n Pieces column, outlined the perfect way to make Amiga owners say, "hey, why didn't I get an Atari 130XE?" I hope that you don't miss it. I realize that a lot of people will not understand all of the concepts that Dr. Brilliant talks about, but read it anyway it is a very interesting article.

Another thing on Tim Sharpe's My Two Cents article. What do you mean you haven't read it yet. Well go ahead, I'll wait for you. It should only take you a few minutes, and I'll almost guarantee that you will enjoy his writing style. He brought up the interesting point of the club giving a disk of software to members who show up at the meeting. He also suggested that we do this a couple of times a year. Well how about it, are any of you out there interested in this concept? What would you like to see as far as software on this disk? And would you ST users like to see this happen also?

One last thing before I let you get on with the rest of the newsletter. Computer Mail Order has several older Atari game cartridges left in their inventory. If you are willing to buy five or more they will sell them to you for $3 a piece. This is an excellent price, so if you get the chance give them a call, their number is listed in both Analog and Antic. This is the perfect opportunity to get some of the old cartridges that you have heard so much about, especially now that Atari is re-releasing them at about $20 a pop or more.

Well, I suppose this just about wraps this little tirade up, so just remember the next meeting will be held on November 13 at 1 p.m. We will meet in the basement of the East Side Lounge on the corner of Horton and Ganson, please pass the word on to members who haven't shown up for a while. Until next time, see you at the meeting.

My Two Cents by Tim Sharpe

Subject: My magic elixer for club rejuvenation.

1. The "Say No To Drugs" event at the Westwood Mall was a noble cause, but it lacked something: excitement. Handing someone a joystick and letting them play an Atari game won't cause a sensation. People aren't impressed by computer video games -- they can go to Aladin's Castle for that. But what if they had a chance to win an Atari computer system? That's right, I'm talking about a raffle. If all the members donated five bucks or half donated ten bucks, we'd be basking in publicity at the next event. A raffle would be a good way to draw

people in and get them to pay attention to the theme of the event. But can the funds be generated, when member apathy is at an all-time high? Anything's possible. Tell the members about the need for donations well in advance, and allow them to pay either in person or by mail. After the event, a thank-you note would be sent to all the members who donated.

2. But we can't very well ask the membership to donate money (or time) when they are chastised in every issue of the newsletter for being apathetic. Although it is understood that such things are born out of frustration, this member-bashing must cease. After all, it is the membership that provides the foundation upon which the rest of the club is built. And they are adults, not children: as such, they deserve respect. Negativity breeds negativity, and more people are won over by sweet words than by bitter ones. If the club is made more interesting and attractive, an increase in membership would surely follow.

3. Which brings me to my next point. Just how DO we make the club more interesting? Let's start by making it more beneficial to the membership. What do the members gain by joining CACE? A chance to win a door prize and 50/50 drawing. A club picnic once a year, but that is a seasonal event, and hardly related to computers. In both these cases (or is it CACEs?) a negative is thrown in: the door prize and 50/50 drawing offer a good chance of losing and the picnic offers a chance of rain. There is nothing wrong with these club traditions: it's just that everyone needs to benefit somehow from joining the club. Therefore, I offer the following suggestion: once or twice a year club money would be used to purchase some inexpensive floppies. On these would be placed the best public domain software the club has in its current library. Every member would be notified via the newsletter that this month is a "CACE Disk Giveaway" month and all they have to do is attend to get a free disk full of software. This would certainly spark more interest in the club. December, and possibly June, would be good months for this. (The club would look EXTREMELY good if these disks were mailed to the members).

Well, that's my magic elixer for curing the ailing club. I just hope that the club doesn't die from partaking of it. If it does, I'll skip town.

Anything Goes by Craig Schaff

Good Afternoon Atarians

As we left off in our last issue...Our unknown soldier was still attending technical school. To make a short story longer.. One day our hero woke up to find out that he was still asleep! Having told himself that we was not awake, he paid no attention to the visions that told him what his ultimate goal in life was. Instead he rolled over, shut his already closed eyes and started dreaming about Vanna White in 8bit graphics.

The next morning, when our "hero" woke up, he grabbed his latest issue of "Solders Of Computers" magazine, he knew right then and there what his goal in life was to be...

"..And that my friends is what I am here to tell You! Yes my friends... I say, just open your wallets... reach deep down into the Soul of all of your earnings and GIVE!. Yes I say GIVE... For it is said,'tis much better for you to GIVE, than to receive!'... So remember what the Good Book (MSDOS Owners manual) says.. 'to PC or not to PC, that is a question of thy greenbacks'...

Our hero, upon leaving the IBM store, was still in shock from listening to the salesman's pitch, when he came across an abused copy of an 8-bit magazine for the Atari computer (it wasn't Analog nor Atari Explorer).

"Well look here a magazine JUST for 8-bit Ataris. Lets check it out.." our Hero said. "Lets see... ST... ST... ST... ST... ST... Oh here we go... a couple of pages of 8-bit stuff. Right here between these ads for the ST."

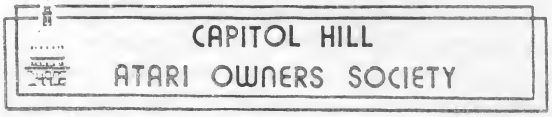
Now a word from our sponsor...Howdy Hi Friends, This is your trusty buddy, Hairy Larry, of Hairy Larry's Used Computers and Live Bait Stores. Have we got a deal for YOU!.For one small price*, this here beauty can be yours! It's got a nice impassive 1k of memory, and not only that!, it was owned by sweet little old lady who only used it on sunday to add up the church's bingo money! And because I like you, I'll even toss in a dozen of minnows FREE! to the first two customers who comes in (and spends two hundred in cash)

*one small monthly payment of $99 a month for 99 months, when you put in your down payment of $99. On now with the show...

The article read... "New 8bit programs for your ST 1040 Com[BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... BEEP, BEEP, BEEP] WE INTERRUPT THIS ARTICLE TO BRING YOU THIS BULLETIN. THE NATIONAL ANNOYANCE SERVICE HAS ISSUED A SEVERE ANNOYANCE RATING IN THIS LETTER AREA!! YOU ARE ADVISED NOT TO READ THIS NOTICE! ANYONE CAUGHT READING THIS BULLETIN WILL BE SEVERELY ANNOYED! I REPEAT... THE NATIONAL HANGNAIL FOUNDATION HAS DETERMINED THAT HITTING YOUR BIG TOE WITH A HAMMER SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT ALL COSTS!!! WE NOW RETURN YOU TO THE ARTICLE THAT IS ALREADY IN PROGRESS[BEEP, BEEP, BEEP... BEEP, BEEP, BEEP]ted States of America. And with that knowledge, our hero takes off to the battle field with his 8bit in hand to boost moral.

Stay tuned for some previews of next months addition of: Good Evening Atarians...but first this break...SNAP!

Previews of next month.. LOOK.. WHERE!.. UP THERE!!.. DUCK!!.. BOOMMMM!!!.. quack...stay tuned and find out if :Will our Hero ever be named? Will this story ever make sense? Will we ever find out what happened during the bulletin? (I doubt it.) Is any body reading this? What is the bable fish and how do I get it? Who is buried in Grants' tomb? Was Kilroy really here? Will Roger Rabbit ever say "please" with out stuttering on the 'P'? Will I ever shut up? What is with the man from Nantucket and all of the ladies? see ya later...bye.



CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS. Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships and so on, to:CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The S.T. INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice Pres	Guy Hurt	484-7675
Sec'y-Treas	Gary Ferris	393-2593
8bit Rep	Bill Johnson	675-7166
16bit Rep	Brian Goluska	332-4415
Library Mgr	John Baker	641-4430
Gen. Pub Lib	I. Pothacamury	332-0558
ST Publ Libr	Chet Kapusinski	676-4539
XL/XE SIG Co	Guy Hurt	484-7675
BBS Sysop	John Nagy	487-5646

CHAOS is sponsoring the Colossal Computer Sale on December 3 and 4 at the Lansing Center on Michigan Avenue here in Lansing — and YOU'RE invited. It's bigger than any computer sale ever in this area and it's the first 2-day sale here, maybe the first in Michigan!!

Here are the highlights: 12,000 square feet and up to 150 tables. Computers, accessories, and software for ALL computers — this is not an Atari-only sale, so tell your friends with those

"other" computers about the sale. Vendors dealing in all brands of computers from all over Michigan and the Midwest. Two days of deep discounting and bargains galore.

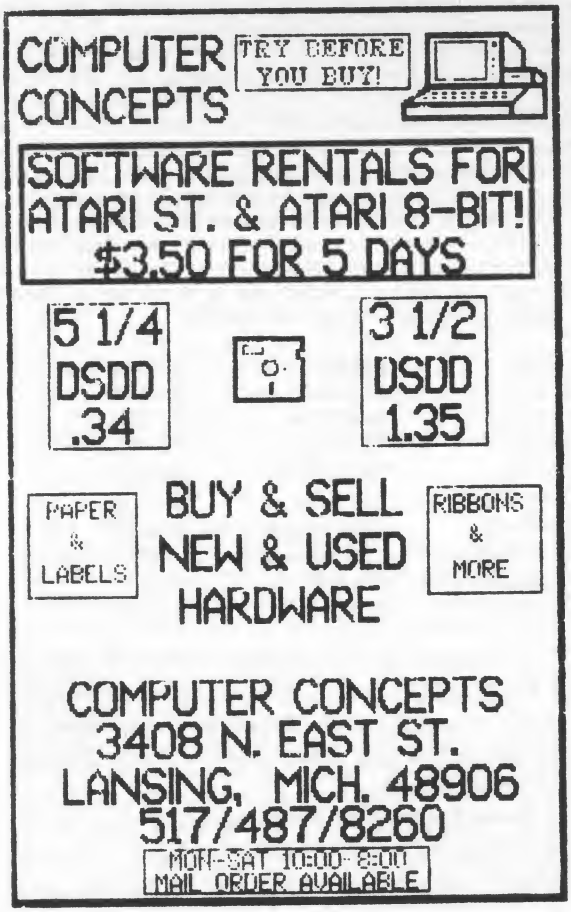
December 3 and 4, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Lansing Center on Michigan Avenue. Admission is only $3.00 per day; kids under 12 admitted free.

President's Corner by Leo Sell

Things are picking up now that fall is here. The big news is that the Colossal Computer Sale we're sponsoring is only a few weeks away. Remember, DECEMBER 3 and 4 at the Lansing Center on Michigan Avenue. The sale should be a great opportunity to pick up some great bargains. With Christmas coming up, it will be the perfect time to get a few presents for you and your Atari.

As the sponsoring club, we want to make sure we have a great display. Guy Hurt is coordinating our presence there and he needs lots of help from you for equipment and time. Help us make the CHAOS display the best ever. Call Guy (484-7675) and VOLUNTEER TODAY!!!

In other news, last month's Auction was a great success making some money for members and the club. Once again there was so much to be sold that we have to continue the auction this month!! So....come to AUCTION II on November 19. Once again you can bring your software and hardware to sell and we will pick up where we left off. See you there.



GENESEE ATARI GROUP
Serving the Flint area

President's Report by Jerry Cross

The elections were held at the October meeting. Due to the lack of members interested in running for office, most of the past officers were re-elected (volunteered?). Here is the current list of officers: Jerry Cross, President; Dave Pettit, Vice President; Gil Merciez, ST Librarian; Ed Kalush, 8Bit Librarian.

If you have the time to spare and would like to help out the club, contact one of these folks. There are a lot of things that you can do, such as helping the librarians maintain the disk library, working on updates to the catalog, writing articles for the newsletter and other little chores. The current officers have been running the club for a few years now, and can use some help. Since the membership has been shrinking the past few months, I am not sure if the Saturday workshops are feasible any more. Attendance has been down, and there is a lack of experienced users who can volunteer their time. I will poll those attending the next workshop to see if we should continue.

The Genesee Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari personal computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc.

GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestbrook Drive, Flint. Meetings begin at 6:30 pm. During the school year we also have a 4th Saturday session for second shift workers. All are welcome.

Membership: $15/year: next meeting Tuesday, Oct 9 General Meeting Saturday, Oct 26 Workshop

Information: Jerry Cross 736-4544 FACTS BBS 736-3920

GKAUG GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00 am in the Dewing Hall, room 305, on the Kalamazoo College Campus, Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $25/yr.

President:	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President:	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer:	Dave Bryant	
Librarian	Dale Vincent	
Archiver:	Dave Oldenburg	
ST Chairman:	Jim Zinke	
SysOp:	Alex Stevens	
GKAUG BBS:	(616) 657-2665	

We got together in October to discuss the possibility of getting different computer users in our group to improve our relationship with other users and provide additional support for those other Atari users that now have newer computer system. Unfortunately, none of the Amiga or ST users showed up. One IBM user did show up and we had the opportunity to discuss increasing the capability of our BBS with him. This subject is still open

for discussion, and will be brought up at the November 12th meeting. I, for one, am really interested in pursuing this issue.

Bryant, Oldenburg and myself will be attending a MAM meeting in Ann Arbor the 22nd of October. I hope we get a chance to look in on a few computer stores. I am looking for "Gaulant" after seeing Bryant's demo at the meeting of this program. It looks very close to the arcade version.

Having a little trouble with the BBS. It seems users can't access it, even after a number of calls....we are checking!!!

I was also able to pass out one box of green and white computer paper to members that attended the meeting. It's about 11 inches wide, but I am sure it can be used with just a little thought on your part. It doesn't have any lazer cut holes, but can be useful nonetheless. It was donated by Pam Stevens of Paw Paw, and I still have two 25# boxes left. I will bring another to the next meeting. I hope you will be there.

Dale Vincent will have a library listing available for members really soon... so he tells me. I hope to get it posted on the BBS board one day soon. Mike Carroll will be making the newsletter for the BBS...if he can get on-line. Dave Bryant provided us with a pie chart breaking down the areas that our money goes. It proved to be most informative. I hope to be solvant for another month or two...please pay your dues! You will get your money's worth out of it.

Dave Oldenburg is still trying to get a working copy of Analog #64 with The "SnowPlow" program in it. We couldn't wait, so it was hand-typed (just like hand-tosed pizza) by Bryant and myself, and is available to those of you who are waiting for it.

Our next meeting will feature the Gravis Mark VI Joystick (again?), discussion of club expansion, and another demo of "Gaulet"...boy, I liked that program! Looking forward to our next meeting.

Frank Fellheimer

Great Lakes Atari ST Support 'GLASS', Michigans only 'ST' only Users Group I ♡ my ST!

GLASS Information: General Meeting, 1st Thursday every month at Athens High School, room 1528, 6 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., located in Troy, Mich., at 4333 John R Road, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile). Guest are welcomed and encouraged to come! Planning Meeting, 2nd Thursday at same location. Members only. Mailing Address - GLASS, P.O. Box 99737, Troy, Mi., 48099 Phone - (313) 828-1653 (Steve Mileski, President) for info.

From The Desk Of The President.....

So, you wanted to know about printers and missed the October meeting. Too bad. Along with showing several 9-pin printers including Color and Thermal, 24-pin printers, and an Atari Laser printer with MEGA4, we also had a Hewlett-Packard DeskJet inkjet printer. If I had to buy a printer now it sure would be a hard choice. By the time you read this, the November meeting is also over. Did you miss the 64 Meg home-built harddrive, the Atari SH204, the MegaDisk, and SwitchBack? Are you going to make it to the December 1st meeting? We are having a guest night to play MIDI-MAZE, with 16 (we hope, we are over 10 now) STs hooked together for an evenings entertainment. See the article called "An Invitation To Play!!" in this issue.

The current ShareWare collection is for SANDP.PRG, our NewsDisk viewing program by Joe Andrews. In my last letter, I asked that you give AT LEAST a dollar..not ONLY a dollar. So, if ya get the newsdisk, lighten up on those purse strings and help us help a good shareware programmer. See another article in this issue called "ASTI Talks About..." for some reasons why.

It's never too soon to renew your membership for the 1989 GLASS year. Due to the club purchasing it's third computer, our cash-flow doesn't, and early renewals would be helpful. As of January 1989, unless you've renewed, your membership is expired. Note: Members that have subscribed to Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM) will get the January issue as part of their 1988 membership.

It's also that time of year to think about elections. No, not the Duke or the Bush, but new GLASS Officers. The jobs are easy (pretty much) and lots of fun. They probably don't take more than a few hours a month and reap the rewards of satisfaction, involvement, and supporting the GLASS members. If you are interested in what jobs there are, look in the December LOOKING GLASS, our in-house newsletter. Come to the Planning Meetings on the second Thursday.

I want to use this forum every month to mention members that are very involved in making GLASS the great club it is today, so now I will honor the November "GOLD STAR GLASS MEMBER. Say "hello" to Drew Solomon. Along with excellent attendance at the General and Planning Meetings, Drew is greatly involved in putting on the Midi-Maze night.

He also wrote a piece of ShareWare (he calls it GLASSWARE) that, when put in the AUTO folder, will ask for you to enter the time & date.. if you don't have a battery-backup clock card. You can exit the program if you don't care about current time and date, or you can enter it. If you perform a reset the program senses it and does not ask for input again, but will display on the screen, for a short time, the current time/date.

He helps every month in setting up and tearing down for the meetings. All this and more, and he comes from quite aways away. He hales from Washington, Mich. (a few miles out of ROMEO, Mi.) where he is in his senior year of high school and runs a BBS called "Infinite Reality" at (313) 781-0871, 300-2400 baud. His passion is programming in C and is practicing by attempting a BBS program. Drew, thanks for being an involved GLASS member and keep doing what you do best!!!

See Ya All Next Month.... Steve Mileski

GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

GRASS Meeting: Wednesday, December 7, 1988, Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael S.W., Time: 6:30 P.M.

George Nosky	President/Treasurer	(616)942-1527
2440 Parkridge Dr. S.E. Grand Rapids, Mi. 49506		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616)676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616)866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616)795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616)896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616)891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616)957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Membership Chairman	(616)784-6230

President's Comments By George Nosky

GRASS welcomes new member Ryan Kiel to our group. Ryan lives in Middleville. We are also happy to welcome back Rodney Fulk who renewed his membership at the October meeting.

Three of our members have reviewed software for M.A.M. Their articles can be found elsewhere in this issue. Brian Boughman and his dad, Chuck, reviewed "Fight Night" and Tim Feenstra critiqued Triple Pack which containes "Raid Over Moscow", "Beach Head" and "Beach Head II".

Be sure you don't miss any of our upcoming meetings! Starting last month (November), Tim Feenstra and Gary Heitz began teaching us how to program using BASIC. They are taking us from the fundamentals and will progress as we progress. I'm sure you won't want to miss these "seminars". Class will be at the beginning of each monthly meeting, starting at 6:30 p.m. and continuing for approximately 45 minutes.

For those who missed the October meeting, I will highlight some of the items your officers and directors discussed at the Board meeting:

1. It was decided to propose another Atari Fair to the membership. This was done at the October meeting and it was decided to proceed. Jerry Borysink has been contacting the local shopping malls. They seem to be booked the rest of this year so we are looking forward to a date in mid-March '89.

2. Advertising was discussed. Gary Heitz checked cost for radio, tv, and the Grand Rapids Press. They were all too expensive.

3. We talked about members submitting articles for publication in MAM. Pattie Rayl is looking for reviews of software, hardware, construction or modification projects which would be of interest to the Atari Community. If you have an article give it to me and I will make sure Pattie gets it.

4. Our updated catalog is duplicated. It should be available at the December meeting.

5. Elections were discussed and the need for people to run for the various offices. Please give it some serious thought.

6. Michigan Atari Magazine was reviewed. Your Board was pleased that the Editors of MAM are trying to get the price down! An informal vote was taken at the October meeting to see if the membership present wanted to continue their MAM subscription. Eighty-six percent voted yes with 14 percent abstaining. There were no dissenters.

7. The subject of members donating, to the club, equipment they are not using, was discussed. The idea behind this is to rent equipment to try out and/or to use if their equipment fails. Gary Heitz donated his spare modem. It will be available at the meetings for $5 per month. This is a good way for you to see if you like telecommunications.

8. A discussion was held concerning what kinds of additional public domain software we should purchase. Suggestions were: more Print Shop icons, Icon editor, SAT score improvement system, foreign language tapes with voice, and programming tapes with voice. Please let us have your ideas.

Gary Borysiak won our October raffle. It seems to me this is the second time he has won. Now he has added "Triple Pack" to his collection. Congratulations!

Gary Heitz has scheduled some outstanding demos for us. For December, Gary has a real energetic project. He is going to give us a VCR demo of GEnie.

As some of you know, we have been wanting to do this for some time. However, since we don't have access to a telephone at the Library, we had dropped the idea. Gary came up with the idea of taping a demo on his VCR at home and showing it at our meeting. If you have ever wondered what on-line information networks are all about, don't miss this one.

In January Greg Williams and Chuck Baughman will demo SpartaDos and the new Atari 551XF disk drive. After the demo, we will raffle off the Sparta Dos package.

Please don't forget that nominations will be taken from the floor for next year's officers.

That's it for this month. I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. See you at the meeting.

M·A·C·E · M·A·C·E · MACE · MICHIGAN·ATARI·COMPUTER·ENTHUSIASTS

Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine, a monthly magazine keeping them informed of what is new in MACE and the whole Atari community, as part of the $20 yearly dues. Those members who do not wish to receive MAM may opt for the $12/year dues which does not include MAM.

Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. Eight-bit disks are $3 and the ST disks are $4 each. The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE officers can and will help.

If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from one of the club's libraries. Mace can be contacted at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037 or by calling Bill Rayl at (313) 973-8825 or Bob Retelle at (313) 483-2114.

The October general meeting of MACE was held on Tuesday, October 17, at the Southfield Civic Center. Meeting Coordinator Bob Retelle called things to order at 7:45 p.m. by attempting to introduce the current "new" officers who were elected at last month's meeting. (Sharie and Heather wasted no time scrambling out the door! You'd think they were shy, huh?)

President Bill Rayl announced the discussion was going to revolve around club business, in an effort to get feedback from the members about what they'd like to see from the club in the coming year. Bill and BobR discussed "What's New" in Atariland. The "Presidential Conference" on CompuServe was not as wonderful as we were lead to believe it would be. The ABAQ/Transputer/Atari Work Station is now being marketed in Europe. AtariWriter 80 is "almost done."

Bob took an informal survey of the members to see how many people own/use 8bit vs. ST equipment. Approximately 95% indicated using 8bits, while approx. 60% indicated ST.

Member Chuck Macek pleaded with the members to make use of the survey form that appears in the October issue of MAM. It is a great way to get our wishes made known in Sunnyvale.

There was a proposal to re-design the membership dues rate structure, allowing for members to get a reduced rate if they choose *not* to get MAM. The suggested rate of $12/year *w/out* MAM and $20/year w/ MAM was approved overwhelmingly. There was also a discussion about whether MAM should continue to be mailed or delivered to members at the meetings. The members chose to continue receiving the magazine by mail.

Benjamin Bartels demonstrated "some of his older stuff..." programs on the XL, including a 3-D graphics displayer complete with editor. Pattie Snyder-Rayl demonstrated Pinball Wizard, and showed how to use its construction set.

Presidentially Speaking

Howdy, MACE members! Well, I got through my first general meeting as your newly-elected president without any major hitches. As those of you who attended the meeting know, the new officers opened up the meeting for discussion and planning of what you would like the club to do for you. For those of you who missed the meeting — shame on you!

Beginning with the November 15th meeting, the meetings will open with Bob Retelle and myself leading a discussion on the previous month's milestones in Ataridom. This will be followed by a short introduction of the night's topic. Then, the room will be divided into smaller "sigs" where various discussions of the topic can be better handled in some depth.

For the November meeting, we will focus on Desktop Publishing/Text programs. We'll be demonstrating MagniPrint II+ from Alpha Systems and, hopefully, NewsRoom or NewsStation. On the ST, Publishing Partner and Timework's Publisher ST will be the feature attraction, with Migraph's EasyDraw and SPAT from Irata Verlag.

So, if you're a MACE member, don't miss this meeting; it promises to be filled with all kinds of information. If you aren't a MACE member, stop in and see what we're all about! Bill Rayl

TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: November 12, & December 17, 1988. Club dues are $20 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bits and ST's, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8bit disks and 70 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1 each, and ST disks cost $2 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

Letter from the Prez

Attendance was up at the October meeting! We had a great turn out, and everybody seemed to have a good time! I'm headed down to the first MAM meeting (a gathering of all the clubs) on October 22nd, so look for a report in the next issue. Remember, if you've got any suggestions speak out at the meeting! We're willing to try anything (well, almost anything)! Hope to see everybody at the November meeting. NOTE: There will a raffle for both the ST and the 8bit at the November meeting!!

STill to Come!

So you want to get into desktop publishing? You want to turn out fantastic ad copy and earn *lots* of money? Then come to the November TAG meeting. We'll be demoing the latest and greatest desktop publishing packages. For the ST, LeRoy Valley will be demoing Timeworks Publisher. This package really outshines Publishing Partner, and coupled with G+Plus, it's dynamite! TAG is purchasing Migraph's ScanArt, especially for demoing AND raffling off at this meeting. On the 8bit side, Ted Beauchamp will be demoing NewsRoom by Springboard. TAG is also purchasing this little gem, and it will be raffled off at the meeting! That's it for this month...show up and have some fun!

RelicST to Relish!

This month' theme was games, and games were seen in abundance! Al Jennings started out by demoing Moon Patrol, a new release for the ST put out by Atari themselves. This version of Moon Patrol is soooo good that you'd swear it was the original! No kidding!! Mike Ranger followed Al with a demo of Typhoon Thomson by Broderbund Software. This game is a delight to the eyes! The game is designed such that both adventurers and arcaders alike will fall in love with it! The graphics are so finely detailed that when the hero goes under water, he fades from sight gradually, then gradually reappears as you bring him up! Neil Demo finished up this month's meeting with a demo of Jet ST, the latest product out from SubLogic. Styled after Flight Simulator, it even allows you to use Flight Simulator Scenery disks! The big difference is that you are now flying a Jet (as opposed to a Cessna) and you can engage in dog fights, and air attacks.

8bit Equipment Volunteers for September:
Ted Beauchamp, 800 XL & Disk Drive: Nelson Greene, Monitor
ST Equipment Volunteers for September:
Marty Schmidt, 1040 ST & Hard Drive: Steve Volker, Monochrome Monitor:
LeRoy Valley, HP DeskJet printer.

The next Meeting of the Washtenaw Atari Users Group will be held on November 8th. The feature topic will be CAD/CAM software. WAUG meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at State Street Computer in Ann Arbor (State St., between E.William and Liberty).

General Meeting, 10/11/'88 by Mike Olin, Sec'y

Jon Brode called the meeting to order at 7:45pm, announcing the topic for the evening would be Emulators. Jon introduced Eric Tobler of Lightening Bolt Computers, who continued last month's demo on Magic Sac, and also discussed the Spectre 128 system for Mac emulation on the ST.

Vice President Howard Chu announced he has been researching the possibility of relocating the meeting place to a building on campus, and has found it is feasible for WAUG to become an officially sponsored organization of Uof M. Further discussion will continue at the November meeting which will still be held at State Street Computer.

ST Librarian Russ Crum announced that his efforts to reorganize the library are nearly complete, and that the catalog disk is now available. It includes a newly written catalog program and is available to members for $2. Members will be able to exchange the disk for future updates at no charge. There are now 101 different disk selections in the library.

8Bit Librarian Mike Millage announced a bundle special of PrintShop icons. Treasurer Dick Selke gave a review of the club financial status for the months of June, July, August and September. Dick also presented member Harry Price with a certificate for his support of the club libraries in the past year. Congratulations Harry!

Mike Pieronek demonstrated the set-up and configuration techniques used in installation of PC-Ditto, and noted that his tests with various speed checking utilities show that this system runs at about 1/3 the speed of a stock XT. Mike also discussed the supposed release of 10 MHz PC clone boards in Germany.

Bill Rayl demonstrated GOE, the "ST Jr" system for the 8bits. It is surprisingly ST-like, and will be very efficient when it becomes available on cartridge.

Jon announced that the CAD/CAM November 8th meeting is being held at the normal time in spite of it being National Elections Night and asked for demonstrators to show anything that deals with the night's topic. Jon also announced upcoming Programming Contests to the (tongue-in-cheek) "highly enthusiastic membership."

ASK TIM by Tim Sharpe

This month I begin a new column devoted to answering questions concerning Atari computers. If you have a question, write to CACE in care of myself and I will try to squeeze it into the column. This month, I'll answer some of the most common questions people have about Atari computers.

Why is the Atari 810 disk drive so large? This is a mysterious phenomenon indeed. To find the answer I contacted a few Atari insiders and they told me the shocking truth: the 810 was originally designed to run on diesel fuel! Atari's reliable old clunker was supposed to have an engine under the hood; but it seems the 810 couldn't meet the government's minimum fuel consumption requirements for disk drives (10,000 sectors per gallon), and there was also a problem with the exhaust system. It's a pity the "Diesel 810" didn't work out -- it probably would have run quieter.

Where did the terms bit, nybble and byte come from? These terms originated during the early years of computing, when computers were very large and occupied several rooms. Programmers in these days had to cope with the problem of transporting data from one room to another. The data consisted of 1's and 0's (i.e., the binary language), and each of these numbers was written onto separate pieces of paper for easy reading. These papers were packed into saddle bags and placed on a horse; a programmer would then mount up and ride off to the next room. In the interest of maximum efficiency, more and more papers were bundled together and placed on the horse. Soon, however, it was discovered that there was a limit to how much the horse could carry on its back. So that more information could be processed, the horse's bit was removed and replaced with one of these papers, which, when rolled up, resembled an actual horse bit. And so it was that a binary number became a "bit." When more of these "bits" were placed in the horse's mouth (in the interest of efficiency), the horse began to react to their presence. When four bits were placed in its mouth, the horse would begin to "nibble" on them. The horse tolerated up to seven bits in its mouth at one time, but at eight bits it would protest and try to "bite" the hand that was stuffing its mouth. The i's in these words were eventually replaced with y's to avoid confusion. So nibble became "nybble" and bite became "byte". A computer phrase also came into being as a result of all this. Since horses aren't potty-trained, there were plenty of messes for the programmers to clean up. Gradually the phrase "deposit a value at a location" worked its way into the programmer's vocabulary.

Are the sixteen-bit Ataris better than the eight-bit Ataris, or vice-versa? This has indeed been a controversial issue. I say "been" because I have conducted a fair and impartial test of my own and have found the answer. Since I own both an Atari 800 and a 520 ST, it was quite easy to determine which was "better." I gave each machine three tests and have listed each test and the corresponding result below:

The Water Test: It is a well-known fact that bad computers sink when immersed in water, and likewise good computers float. I filled a bathtub with water and placed both the 800 and the 520 ST in it. Results: The ST went straight to the bottom. The 800 was buoyant beyond belief, and the cartridge hatch provided ample room for a rubber duckie. Chalk one up for the eight-bits.

The Punt Test: An important feature of any computer is its ability to be kicked long distances. This action is necessary after running a difficult program or encountering a zillion bugs in a program you wrote and thought would work the first time. It relieves tension and lets you live a longer life. Results: Both computers weighed roughly the same and could be kicked with about the same force. However, since the ST is built much like an airplane wing, it flew three times the distance the 800 did. (The mouse acted like the tail of a kite and steadied the ST in flight.) Chalk one up for the sixteen-bits.

The 100 Meter Freefall: Crucial to any computer is its ability to be dropped. Accidents happen. Results: After finding a particularly nasty precipice, I dropped both computers simultaneously. Both shattered spectacularly. This one was a tie.

I have come to the conclusion that both machines have their own unique advantages and disadvantages, and that either machine is preferable to the typewriter I'm typing this on.

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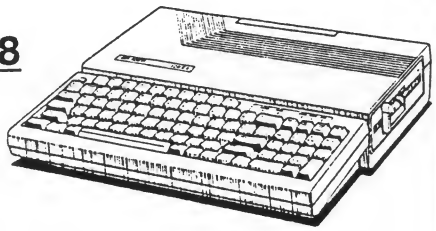

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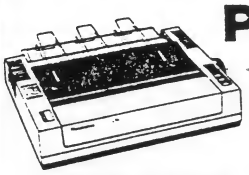

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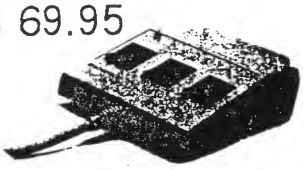

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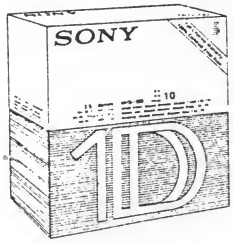

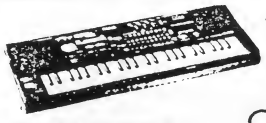

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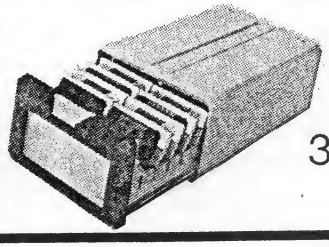

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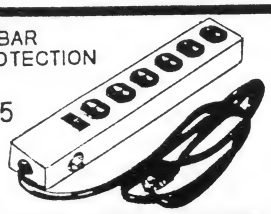

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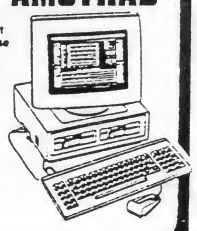

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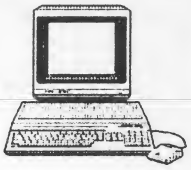

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MAM this Month

Features

Editorial Ramblings	2
From the Reader's Viewpoint	3
The Spectre of Software Piracy	5
Hackers...A Book Report	7
Call Blocking Update	8
The Sac is Back! (ST)	10
Living with an 8bit Atari in an IBM World(8bit)	12
Financial+Plus and RoloBase+Plus (ST)	14
Magniprint II+ (8bit)	16
Easy-Draw (ST)	19
MuZap (ST)	21
The SpartaDOS X Cartridge (8bit)	23
Triple Pack (8bit)	25
Last Hacks...Stanley & Knob	29
	36

Club News and Minutes

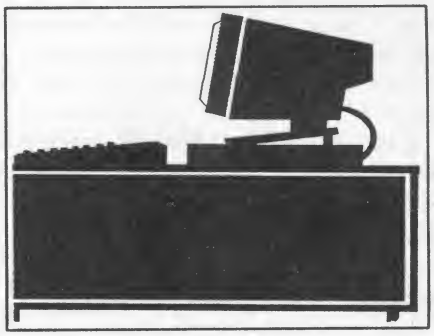
CACE	(Jackson, MI)	27
CHAOS	(Lansing, MI)	28
GAG	(Flint, MI)	30
GKAUG	(Kalamazoo, MI)	30
GLASS	(Troy, MI)	31
GRASS	(Grand Rapids, MI)	32
MACE	(Southfield, MI)	33
TAG	(Saginaw/Tri-Cities)	34
WAUG	(Ann Arbor, MI)	34

Advertisers

Toad Computers	6
Application & Design	6
Brad Roltgen Software	8
Pracitcal Solutions	9
Logical Design Works	11
Mars Merchandising	15
Unicorn Publications	15
Alpha Systems	17
SoftHouse Computer Center	18
Sideline Software	20
Migraph, Inc.	22
Sector One Computers	26
Irata Verlag	28
State Street Computer	32
Rentertainment Computers	33
Graphicom Enterprises	36
Compu-Tegrity	Inside Front Cover
Word Perfect. Inc.	Inside Back Cover
RiteWay Computers	Back Cover

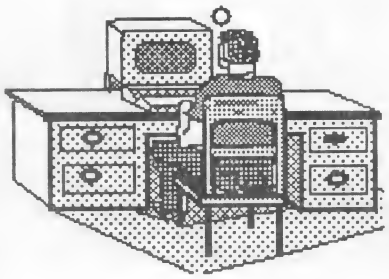
Volume 3, No. 11 December 1988

Spectre of Software Piracy 5



An 8Bit in an IBM World 12

MuZap! -- Teaches Music 21



Editorial Ramblings

In late October, the presidents and a few officers of the majority of participating clubs in MAM gathered for a meeting to discuss a number of issues, including the concerns of CHAOS that have been raised in the online publication ZMAG.

Due to lengthy discussion about the concerns of CHAOS and "ownership," most of the topics we had wished to discuss were not talked about, such as membership drives and using MAM for club PR. Hopefully, we can all get to these in the near future — perhaps at the next "committee" meeting. More on that later.

At the October meeting, CHAOS asserted that, in the past when John Nagy published MAM, the participating clubs were equal co-owners of the magazine. More on this later, too! Regardless of the past, after being approached by John Nagy to take over publication of MAM, we informed him we would take the magazine only if the publication could be produced independently from the clubs. We felt, and still do, that this arrangement would work best for both the publication and the clubs, most of whom do not wish to deal with the "dirty work" of producing a publication each month.

When MAM was officially transferred to Unicorn Publications in November, 1987, John Nagy supplied us with a letter stating he turned over any and all ownership of MAM that he held, but he felt the individual clubs owned part of the magazine as well. On that point, it seems we agree. But CHAOS and Unicorn Publications disagree on what that ownership is.

It is our position that each club and author owns the individual articles, club news and minutes that are supplied monthly by the club for inclusion in MAM. Each club is also *guaranteed* a section in the magazine where they will be represented by whatever information they supply. Unicorn Publications, however, owns the publication Michigan Atari Magazine and all rights pertaining to the publication as a whole. In other words, we claim no ownership of any and all club-supplied material, but we DO own the magazine and the right to sell it in stores, have outside subscribers, et cetera.

CHAOS, as represented by their president, Leo Sell, strongly disagrees. He wants more. In an attempt to give CHAOS and all other participating groups more input into the magazine, it was suggested that a committee be formed that could advise us on whatever topics it felt necessary. Leo Sell, however, wanted the committee to have full veto power over any decisions we might make, including but not limited to who participates in MAM, where the magazine is sold and printed and the overall style and content of the publication. The other groups at the meeting expressed the opinion that they would rather not deal with the production issues — since one of the benefits of joining MAM is to avoid the "hassle" of producing their own newsletters.

By the end of the meeting, it had been decided that an advisory committee would be set up, and we supported this idea. John Nagy was chosen to draft the proposal to be submitted for the approval of all participants. At that time, Leo Sell stated he would support such a proposal if the other clubs were willing to do so. The other clubs stated they would support such a proposal. [The unfinished version of this proposal appears at the end of this issue.]

But, life is never that easy, is it? After the proposal was drawn up, we received a call from John Nagy. John stated he felt he could no longer support the proposal,

(Continued on Page 4)

People Who Make It All Possible

Managing Editor: Patricia Snyder-Rayl
Editor: Bill Rayl
Art Work & Comic Strip: Steve Volker
Contributors: Jim Brozovich, Jerry Cross, Tim Feenstra, Brent Fisher, Darin Gray, Keith Joins, Steve Mileski, Bob Retelle, and all the participating clubs.

What We Are

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From the Reader's Viewpoint

MAIL ORDER MONSTERS

Dear Editor,

I noticed a few things missing from Brent Fishers' article on "Mail Order Monsters" in the November issue of MAM.

His comment about the computer having stronger monsters is a bit of an understatement. The computer's monsters are heavily equipped with the most expensive and deadly weapons as soon as you pick up anything stronger than a dart gun until your monster gets great power himself, at which point you fight "Sluggo," who, if you start using all the fancy weapons and gadgets, is not nearly as tough as some of the earlier monsters.

Therefore, the real trick to the game is to build up your monsters (in tournament level, of course) by playing against another person, or by using a little bug in the program. The bug occurs when you battle for an even number of fights to win a match (this is selected just before entering the battleground), upon winning, your owner's psychons (the unit of currency used to purchase just about everything in the game) suddenly grows into the thousands.

There were also two problems with the game which were not mentioned. The first is, if the computer is turned off after your monster is sent to the battle grounds, the password to get to your owner seems to disappear, and all your work is lost.

The other is that if your owner has only one monster, and it dies, then your owner gets the same amount of psychons as he/she began with, even if they had more than that built up. Despite these problems, though, as Brent mentioned, it is really an excellent game.

Ben Dillon

Thanks Bill and Pattie

It hardly seems it's been a year since Bill and Pattie took over the operation of composing and producing Michigan Atari Magazine, their first issue appearing in December '87. I think I speak for the majority of subscribers when I say I am more than just a little impressed with the quality of their work, and I look forward to receiving my issue each month.

From my experience working with them, I know first hand what a phenomenal amount of work is involved in producing this magazine. I am also well aware of the small rewards for their labors, and it is this point which impels me to write and tell them "Thanks" for the energy and effort they expend on our behalf each month. Atari User Groups throughout the state of Michigan are reaping benefits of exposure to potential members who might otherwise not ever know there is a user group within driving distance, not to mention the virtual exposure across the nation as MAM is distributed to other user groups on an exchange program. (Little did it occur to me that my rendition of the monthly meeting minutes for both WAUG and MACE might end up on the desks of Sig Hartmann, Neil Harris <ahem> or the Tramiels themselves.)

The point I am trying to make here is that Bill and Pattie's efforts should not go unobserved. Everyone is reaping benefits from their work, and I encourage each and every one of you to tell them what you think. (It does NOT have to be the case that user group members are a lackadaisical bunch waiting to be entertained, but this is another story...)

If there is one thing I would offer as an "I'd like to see...." for Bill and Pattie, it is an improved effort on their part to catch spelling errors in the feature articles. I recognize it is a very hard job to do this and, considering that user groups are receiving this magazine at cost, such things SHOULD be caught long before articles are even submitted, however in the end I personally think typos tend to detract from the perceived quality of any publication regardless of how or why they exist. (Some of you may recall the outcry a few years ago when the MACE Journal came littered with typos several months running...)

Anyway, here's to Bill and Pattie for the excellent work they have done to keep Michigan's Atarians informed. Merry Christmas to you both, and to everyone else who reads this.

Michael Olin, MACE & WAUG

Mike,

Thanks for your words of support. As for the typos, a few of those little nasties seem to creep through, and even Thunder can't catch 'em! Now that we're using Timeworks Desktop Publisher ST (and PageStream soon!), it actually takes less time to produce and print the magazine. This gives us more time for spell checking and editing. We hate those pesky little typos as much as anyone!

Bill and Pattie Rayl.

(Continued from Page 2)

but he gave no reasons as to why. In contacting Leo Sell, we were told that he too would not go along with the proposal. In fact, Leo Sell has stated he will pull CHAOS out of MAM when a suitable alternative is found. The presidents of at least two other participating clubs have been approached by CHAOS to join with them. At this time, no other club has done so. When asked if this matter had been brought up to the CHAOS members at large, Leo Sell said, "We don't do things that way." [Ed:Since that conversation, Leo Sell has contacted us again, and has informed us that he has discussed the issue with his group and they support his position.]

It is sad that such an incident as this has occurred. Frankly, we find it hard to understand the motives and reasons behind the actions of Leo Sell. He has stated that the clubs used to equally own the publication, and equal ownership is the only terms under which they seem to be willing to participate. If that is true, why did all but one of the original participating clubs say at the meeting they never knew they were part owners? When some clubs both INSIDE and outside the state approached John Nagy and CHAOS, asking to become participants, CHAOS turned them away. Was that a joint decision by all participants in MAM? And, finally, when people outside the participating clubs subscribed to MAM under CHAOS, why were these subscriptions funnelled into the CHAOS treasury as new memberships? (It was not mere coincidence that the original MAM subscription rate was equal to the yearly membership dues for CHAOS.) If all the clubs TRULY owned the magazine at that time, those funds should have been divided equally between the participating clubs. They were not.

It is very disheartening to us that the leadership in CHAOS seems unwilling to put aside whatever differences they may have with MAM and its participants and work toward the goal of a stronger and unified Atari community. Leo Sell feels his club does not have enough say in MAM, and we were willing to give CHAOS more opportunity to voice its opinions and make suggestions in a committee with other MAM participants. That doesn't seem to be enough for Leo Sell, and it seems CHAOS has decided to discontinue participation in Michigan Atari Magazine. It truly saddens us to see this happen, and we wish CHAOS well in their future endeavors.

We are still committed to continuing to make Michigan Atari Magazine one of the best user group oriented publications available, and at a price the groups can all afford. (In fact, our price per issue to participating groups recently dropped ten cents an issue.) We have opened up a number of store sales outside the state — MAM is now being sold in select Atari stores from Maine to California! — and we hope to expand our store sales even more. In fact, if you have an Atari store in your area that doesn't carry MAM, send us their address and phone number! The more store sales and advertising revenues we can generate, the lower the cost of the magazine for us all!

The idea of a committee of user group representatives has appealed to us for some time now, and we will be moving ahead on organizing a committee to meet three or four times a year to discuss any issues that concern us all as user groups. In other words, a social gathering where we all let our hair down and tell computer horror stories over a drink — or two, or three... :-)

To all members of CHAOS, we are sorry that we will lose your input and individual contributions to the magazine. We are also sorry that, apart from local store sales and individual subscriptions, you will no longer be receiving MAM. We took a big step toward compromise in our willingness to work with an advising committee, supplying them with financial and production information if they so chose. That wasn't and isn't acceptable to your president, so here we are. We wish you all well and hope you can successfully produce your own newsletter. We sincerely wish you all the best of luck. If any of you wish to discuss this issue further with us — or the presidents of other participating clubs, please feel free to do so.

To any Atari clubs out there reading this — if you are producing a viable newsletter or perhaps a joint publication with other clubs, keep up the good work and more power to you! But, for those clubs not able to consistently produce a newsletter, there are alternatives. Don't give up! There may be other clubs willing to band together with you under one publication name. If your club would like more information on how to accomplish this (and how to avoid some of the problems we've faced), please write to us, give us a call, or drop us a line on Delphi (UNICORNPUB) or CompuServe (71361,411).

Addendum — November 19, 1988: We have just received a call from Leo Sell in which Mr. Sell stated his desire that the name Michigan Atari Magazine be dropped from this publication. He has gone as far as threatening legal action if we do not voluntarily do this. Because we have been expanding beyond Michigan in store sales and with prospects of clubs outside the state participating in the magazine, we have considered changing the publication's name sometime in the future. Regardless, we do not take kindly to Mr. Sell's ultimatems.

By the time you read this, we will have contacted the other participating club presidents to apprise them of the situation and to get their input on this matter. If you are a member of a participating club, please speak to your club president and give him/her your input and to find out more details.

Due to space limitations, Atari News and Comment will not appear this month. The column will return next month with information on COMDEX, the Toronto Show, and the recent ZMAG and ST Report split, along with other tidbits from the Atari World!

The Spectre of Software Piracy

by Bill Rayl

The issue of software piracy is always with us. It's there, hiding in the shadows...waiting for a chance to catch us off guard. During a recent CompuServe (CIS) conference with Ralph Mariano, editor of the on-line publication ST Report, the piracy topic dominated the discussion.

Ralph, better known by his pseudonym "Rex Reade," was flatly accused of pirating ST software and distributing it via his bulletin board system (BBS) in Florida. The accusation was levied by a person under the name Elwood, and was followed by a partial upload of a download list allegedly captured from the BBS Ralph is affiliated with.

Ralph's reply to the accusations was not an immediate denial of the charges, but rather a statement that anyone can create a fake download list. Elwood went on to claim Ralph was once a beta-tester for Michtron, but was dropped due to his pirating activities.

In the days following the conference, we had phone conversations with Ralph Mariano, the two people using the name Elwood, CompuServe's Ron Luks, Gordon Monnier of Michtron and others who do not wish their names revealed. As the pieces of this all started to fit together, a rather dark picture began to appear.

Information is only as credible as its source, and in this case, many of the sources are of questionable reputation. A number of the "nameless sources" we contacted candidly admitted to us that they are pirates. Keep that in mind while reading this article.

The Past

After the official conference ended, a number of people moved into a small conference in the Atari Arts Forum on CIS. In this conference, one of the CIS SysOps stated he knew Ralph had been involved in piracy in the past, but he was under the impression that was all in the past. Other sources have also stated they knew Ralph was once a pirate or that they had heard rumors to that effect. Elwood 1, Ralph 0.

Concerning the accusation that Ralph pirated Michtron software while beta-testing for them, Gordon Monnier of Michtron says Ralph Mariano/Rex Reade has never been employed as a beta-tester. Elwood 1, Ralph 1.

The Bounty ST

The BBS that is the home of Ralph Mariano and ST Report is the Bounty ST BBS in Jacksonville, Florida. The BBS has 380 megs on-line and is accessible at 9600 baud on down. Elwood claimed the BBS had over 1,000 files on-line, many of these being pirated programs from the US and Europe. After the conference, Elwood reportedly passed a user name and password to Ron Luks, "who could not get in" using the supplied name. Independently, we also obtained a different, allegedly active user name and password with pirate access on the Bounty ST BBS. We also could not get in. The system did not recognize the password we were given.

Considering these accounts were tried only after the public allegations were made, the lack of access isn't conclusive for either side. We have found two sources other than the Elwoods who claim they have personally seen pirated files on the Bounty ST in the past few months, but these sources could not or would not supply proof of their statements. No score for either side here.

The Flip Side

In reply to the accusations, Ralph Mariano has levied counter charges at the Elwoods of pirating, phreaking (illegal use of phone lines) and credit card fraud.

The Elwoods, according to Ralph, are members of a group called Crime, Inc. Ralph stated he has pirate access to a BBS called The Crypt, which is run by at least one of the Elwoods. It seems Ralph, who builds hard drives in his spare time, was contacted by one of the Elwoods (call him Elwood1) to build a hard drive. Ralph was reportedly given just over $900 by Elwood1. Ralph says he told Elwood1 he could get a 65 or possibly an 85 meg drive for that price, and Ralph would get Elwood1 the best deal he could.

At that time, according to Ralph, the Elwoods gave Ralph pirate access to The Crypt BBS. Ralph built a 65 meg hard drive for Elwood1; Elwood1 expected an 85 meg drive and felt cheated, and it went downhill from there.

In our conversations with the Elwoods, they readily admitted they were pirates, do run a "small" pirate BBS called the Crypt and Elwood1 did buy a hard drive from Ralph. Ralph 2, Elwood 1.

Who's keeping score?

The end (hopefully?) to the entire fiasco is a public apology, apparently written by "Elwood" and posted on CIS by Ralph Mariano. The apology states that the download list was faked. We have not been able to contact Elwood since this development.

Hopefully, in reading the last few paragraphs, you were more than a little offended by our keeping score. You should have been. If this can, in any sense, be thought of as a game, it is a game in which neither Ralph Mariano nor the Elwoods won — in fact, we all lost.

Although many ST Report readers don't always agree with his approach and opinions, Ralph Mariano is one of the ST's most vocal and visual on-line supporters. The public attack by Elwood, regardless of its truth or falsity, blackened the whole Atari community and automatically made it impossible to prove or disprove the accusations to everyone's complete satisfaction. Even the authenticity of the apology has been questioned by on-line observers.

The news that Ralph Mariano was branded a software pirate on CIS spread to GEnie in less than an hour. Outside the Atari community, the rumor is spreading that one of the major on-line ST supporters is also a major ST pirate. Regardless of what the truth may be, the rumor can only bring problems for all of us in the Atari world.

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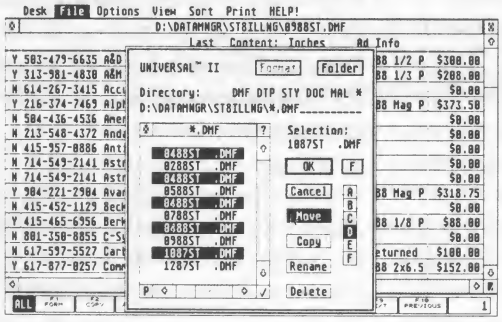

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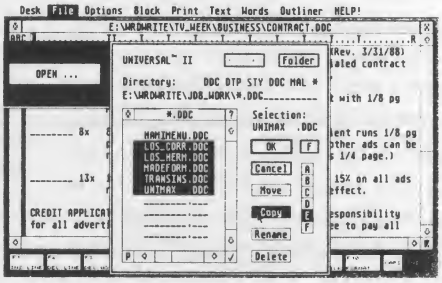

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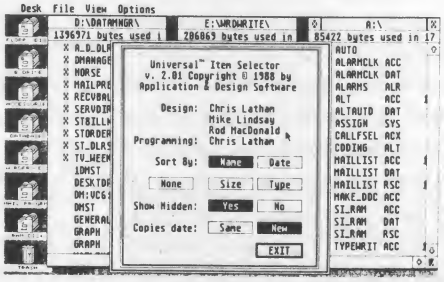

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Hackers...
A Book Report

by Steve Mileski (GLASS)

I was wandering through the school library one day and saw this book called *Hacker* by Steven Levy. Being the curious sort I picked it up and read the reviews page and the preface. Hmmm... interesting. So, of course, home it comes. Copyright 1984 and published by Dell Publishing, this volume was hard-bound and had a colorful cover.

At home, looking it over before starting, I see it's in very small type with over 400 pages. Hope this doesn't turn out to be a chore to read! ..... Wow, this is really good. Realizing that our neat desktop computers had to come from somewhere, this would give me a sense of history of the computing world and the persons that got us here.

The book instantly captivated my interest, telling about the world of the priesthood of batch-processing on the big main-frames like the IBM704, where only the privileged few could submit "offerings" of punch-cards through windows to the keepers of the "Hulking Giant" and the other world of the "hackers."

The hackers were college kids whose whole life was logic, math, electronics, and the sciences. The kids were looked on as nerds due to their dress and lack of social graces. It started with being part of a club called TMRC (for Tech Model Railroad Club), the part which worked under the table wiring switching systems from parts salvaged from various phone closets and other sources of electronic devices. But I'm getting ahead of myself, let's look at the structure of the book itself first.

Part One – True Hackers, Cambridge: The Fifties and Sixties

The scene: MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in Cambridge. The people: the kids from the model railroad club who provided the switching and controlling systems design, maintenance, and modifications. The occurrence: the long-term loan of a "TX-0" computer.

The kids were given access by a former member of TMRC and now member of the faculty, Jack Dennis, to explore this strange computer that would accept input from a Flex-O-Writer keyboard and paper-tape. It could have programs modified directly on-line rather than submitting punched cards to the priests of the Hulking Giant — an IBM704, only to have to wait until the next day for the results, often shredded. The access time, of course, was at night but that wasn't a problem to the kids, they would stay up all night to have a true "interactive, hands-on" machine like the TX-0 to use. And they did.

As it was, the TX-0 only had 4096 words of memory so the programs written for it had to be very efficient. Also, it had to be programmed in machine language because there was absolutely no software for it. One of the first projects was to write an "assembler," that's a program that will translate an instruction like ADD Y into a machine language instruction like 10011001100001 that the machine can read. There were utilities and debuggers and, yes, games to write.

These kids were the first Hackers, with names like Alan Kotok, Peter Samson, Peter Deutsch, Bob Wagner, Steve 'Slug' Russell, Rickey Greenblatt, Bill Gosper and Bob Saunders. The ones who lived for the Hacker Ethic: "Access to computers — and anything which might teach you something about the way the world works — should be unlimited and total. Always yield to the Hands-On Imperative!"

They were the source of the first games, SPACEWAR and LIFE, the first joy-stick and the first computer-generated music; the ones who made electronic magic on the PDP-1 from the new Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC).

Part Two – Hardware Hackers: Northern California, the Seventies

The scene: Berkeley. The people: the high-tech hippies. The occurrence: The first public terminal of the Community Memory project. The Community Memory project was the first public BBS on a time-shared XDS-940 mainframe. The terminal was located in Leopold's Records on Durant Avenue. Computers to the people!

These were the "crazy" seventies, the days of the traveling computer show. The days of the first Microprocessors, Integrated Circuits, the Altair (the first mass marketed home computer kit), the Apple (the first truly powerful personal computer — built in a garage no less!), and the very first computer users group.

Affectionately known as Homebrew, the Amateur Computer Users Group Homebrew Computer Club had their first meeting on March 5, 1975. Attended by electronic and computer freaks from around the bay area, they quickly numbered over 300 members. There was a world full of people sharing a love and desire for a nonexistent personal computer. The times provided for the people needed to take the computing world one step closer to your desk, names like Ted Nelson, Lee Felsenstein, Efrem Lipkin, Bob Albrecht, Stew Nelson, Steve Dompier, and Steven Wozniak.

Part Three – Game Hackers : The Sierras, the Eighties

The scene: The offices of Sierra On-Line , Broderbund, and Sirius. The people:

software hackers of all ages whose love affair with the new personal computers was shown by the excellence of their game programming. The occurrence: The beginnings of "copy protection" and software piracy. The early days of Sierra saw the desire for perfection and quality of the game play. Programmers coded for the love of coding and were proud of their works. Pay was based on a percentage of their software sales. By golly, there was BIG money to be made.

Unfortunately, as the years went by, it was felt that it was more important to market a lot of games in pretty wrappings rather than stick to the idea of GREAT programs that pushed the machines to their limit. The programmers were no longer catered to. Mass-marketing had come to the computer world. Ken and Roberta Williams, Dick Sunderland, Jay Sullivan, Nasir Gebelli, John 'Captain Crunch' Draper, Steve Dompier were just some of the names that adorned these times, which we are still experiencing.

In Conclusion

I found the book to be captivating. The only chore involved was to put the book down at night. Yes, there were tremendous insights into the people, places, and things that brought these desktop computing wonders to us. This book can help you to appreciate the short but very fast-paced history that brought our computers to us. Read and enjoy!

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Call Blocking Update

by Jerry Cross (GAG)

I'm going to do something I have never done before, write a serious article (gasp!). No jokes this time, because this is a serious issue and you should be very concerned with it.

In the October issue of MAM you read about how a certain long distance telephone carrier in Iowa was practicing what is called call blocking. In review, this means this company, Teleconnect, Inc., is blocking calls made through their long distance system to other callers, without notifying either the person making the call or the person whose number is being blocked.

As an employee of Michigan Bell, I was especially concerned with this practice. This practice is an obvious violation of your rights, and long distance companies have no right to tamper with telephone calls. Even though this practice appears to be limited to only calls made to certain bulletin board systems, what is stopping them from blocking calls to whoever they wish? Would you, as an honest business man, appreciate AT&T blocking calls to your lines because some dishonest person or phone hacker made some illegal calls to you? It could easily cost you a lot of business!

Well, after I first read the article, sent to me by another concerned computer user, I felt I needed to do something. By an incredible coincidence, this same company (Teleconnect, Inc.) was just now setting up shop in the Michigan area, but was limiting their business only to business customers and was ignoring residence customers.

Thus begins my quest! I immediately went to "The Mike Wallace 60 Minute School of Journalism," which I finished in only 48 minutes. (Sorry, I promised no jokes.) I learned the three steps of good investigative reporting. Gather evidence, interview witnesses and then pounce on the victim. So, after talking to some witnesses in Iowa, I discovered that one of Teleconnect's main defenses was that local phone companies would not work with them to identify the phone hackers.

Well, this sounded strange to me, so I called both the Michigan Bell Staff Security people, plus a few co-workers I used to work with. MBT has a special office located in Southfield headed by Daryl Miller, a staff manager. MBT will supply the long distance carriers with information about calls made to certain numbers. Also, if necessary, MBT will help establish an entire case for the carrier against the suspect and even testify in court. So much for Teleconnect's excuses.

My next call went to AT&T. Since they have long had an established long distance network to every central telephone office, toll fraud was not a major problem. However, there are still those who will attempt to discover someone's credit calling card number by using their computer to constantly dial codes until one is discovered. Both MBT and AT&T are ready and waiting for them, with the use of their own monitoring computers that can quickly discover when a series of incorrect credit

cards are entered, and can locate the hacker within minutes. So, once again there is no need for AT&T to resort to call blocking. I wonder why Teleconnect does not have a similar system set up to at least tell if someone is trying to discover an illegal credit number? I guess it's just cheaper to block calls, huh?

My calls to both MCI and Sprint went unanswered, and calls to other carriers were usually transferred to other supervisors with the usual replies of "We don't discuss security matters" or "You will have to contact our Media Relations department," which was usually followed by "What magazine did you say you write for?"

Next, thanks to a tip from another AT&T friend, I got in contact with the Telecommunications Fraud Association. This is, I think, a lobbying group located in Washington, District of Columbia, that is sponsored by the long distance carriers, and helps to advise legislators on Telecommunications Fraud laws. Once again, though, I lacked the backing of a big-time magazine to get any type of reply. I even had to send them a sample of our magazine to prove it was for real!

I could see it was time to start enlisting help. I started calling the Michigan Public Service Commission, which is responsible for regulating the phone industry in Michigan. What a joke! After sending a few letters and making some phone calls, I didn't get anywhere with them.

Time to bring out some bigger guns. I sent a letter to both Representative Kildie and Senator Riegle. Mr. Kildie sent me a nice form letter thanking me for bringing this important matter to his attention and promised he would shuffle it off to some underling. Things were looking bad now. But then I got a CALL from Mr. Riegle's office. After going over the whole thing again with one of their staff members, I was told they would look into it. About 2 weeks later, I got a letter saying that a complaint had been issued in my name with the Interstate Commerce Commission. Although this does show a little progress, I don't expect any quick answers from them either.

OK, so now I was ready to confront Teleconnect. Armed with all sorts of conflicting testimony, I got hold of their media relations person and screamed "SO ARE YOU GUYS BLOCKING CALLS IN MICHIGAN, OR WHAT!?!"

"No, we aren't" she said. Oops! I forgot lesson #1! I needed evidence. Darn, I don't have any. Now what do I do?

That's where you readers come in. If you are using one of the long distance carriers, and for some reason cannot get through to your number, first try using another long distance company such as AT&T. If you do get through, then you may have discovered a blocked call! If so, let me know! I will investigate it further and turn over this information to Mr. Riegle's office. I am also tracking down some other sources of help, but don't expect any more information for a while. But unless I can prove call blocking is indeed going on in Michigan, there is not much we can do through legal channels. So please let me know if you discover any blocked lines.

Contact: Jerry Cross, C/O GAG, PO Box E, Flint, MI 48507.

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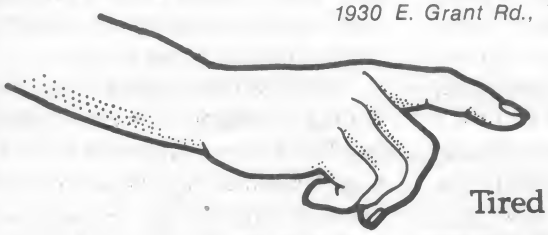

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THE MASTER SERIES

The Sac is Back!

by Darin Gray (GLASS)

Few people realize the built-in power of the ST. A 68000 CPU can blow the doors off most other microprocessors in the market today. It was not until the 68000 that micros really had the power to emulate other computers. This fact convinced Dave Small the ST would make an excellent low-priced Macintosh. Thus began the Magic Sac and David's latest brainchild, the Spectre 128 (loosely referred to as the Magic Sac II).

Late in 1986 Dave Small released the Magic Sac. This product was the first and only Macintosh emulator available for the ST, or any machine I believe. Dubbed "The Best Hack of 1986" by Jerry Pournelle of Byte, the Sac soon became famous (or at least infamous) and Data Pacific, producers of the Magic Sac, famous with it. I don't know how many units were sold, but suffice it to say "lots." Soon many ST-related magazines featured regular Magic Sac columns.

The Sac in the early days was mostly a toy, one of those things you whipped out to show the local Mac czars and tell them the low price you paid. The software just crashed too much to feel safe doing anything really important on it. Data Pacific continued to upgrade the Sac and, in revision 4.51, "crash-proofed" it. It was then the Magic Sac became a viable product in its own right. Data Pacific continued to upgrade the product. They provided the Translator, an external box allowing the ST to read and write Mac format disks. The software continued to improve until it reached it present form, revision 6.0.

It was then Dave Small formally left Data Pacific due to a disagreement and decided to retire from programming. Becoming bored with nothing to do, Dave posted a message inquiring if there was any interest in a 128K version of the Magic Sac. The older Magic Sacs used 64K ROMs which were being phased out by Apple in favor of the newer 128K ROMs. The response was a definite yes. In April, '88, Dave began plans for the Spectre 128, the 128K MacIntosh emulator. By September '88 he had a version ready for release and formally announced it at the Atari Show in Glendale under his new company, Gadgets by Small, Inc.

The Spectre, billed as "The Premier Macintosh Emulator," started to recapture the excitement of the original emulator. This emulator, though, has a great deal more to offer. First, it's faster. Not on things like calculation speed but on floppy and hard drive access. As a matter of fact, the hard drive access flies. In a benchmark against a Mac II, the Spectre beat it, and the Mac II has a 68020! The new ROMs also use Apple's new filing system called HFS.

The older ROMs needed a program called HD20 to operate under HFS. The Magic Sac required you to have a small MFM boot partition to use HFS. No more on the Spectre, you only need one partition and that can be up to 32 Megs. Floppy access has been improved 300 percent, according to Gadgets.

In addition, compatibility was increased. The Magic Sac used the older ROMs which did not have the serial drivers built in. The new 128K ROMs have the drivers built in and as a result a lot of the telecommunication programs which didn't work before now do, including Microphone II and Red Ryder. The Spectre can also use all versions of the System/Finder software including the latest, System 6.02. This enhancement alone provides much greater compatibility. Programs which did not take advantage of the expanded memory now do, and crashes are now few and far between.

One major addition to the list of compatible software is HyperCard. As a HyperCard skeptic myself, I can tell you this program is everything it's billed. It's not only a database but an entire language. The language is very easy to program, as it requires only dragging and clicking to compose a whole new program. This makes it ideal for the beginner as well as the experienced programmer. You'll be seeing even more HyperCard-like software as time goes on.

As before, the Spectre can be used with the Translator to read and write Mac format disks directly. Also, Magic Sac format disks can be read with no conversion at all, however, there will be no increased floppy speed. The software included with Spectre is very close to the Magic Sac, but the former stand-alone programs for formatting, copying, etc. have been integrated into a very professional-looking program. As always, the hidden dedication page is there.

The included software, as of this writing, is version 1.51 and is generally bug free, however, there are a few minor bugs. The crash page (which you almost never see anyway) now requires that you shut off your machine and completely reboot (the Magic Sac would reboot directly to Mac mode for you), and it does not work with the developer release of TOS 1.4. I am quite sure these small bugs (no pun intended) will be corrected in version 2. There is also a drop down menu item for sound. Well, we can hope.

If you have use for a Macintosh, the Spectre is highly recommended. Even if you have no use for a Mac, once you get it, you'll love the software available for it. The ST-Spectre combination takes advantage of both computers, the low price and speed of the ST and the large software base for the Mac. Besides, it's fun!

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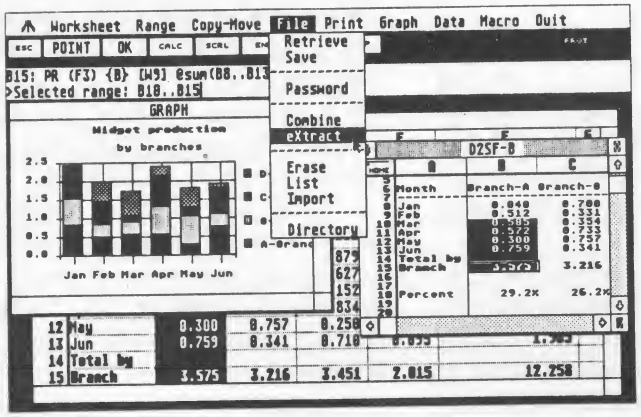

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Living with an 8Bit Atari in an IBM World

by Jim Brozovich (MACE)

If you are like me, you purchased your Atari system years ago when only the Fortune 500 could afford an IBM system.

The trusty old Atari has been much help in family budgeting, income tax preparation (via Antic Syncalc spreadsheets), and helped immensely in my recent job search.

But at work, IBM was king, and I became a power user of Lotus 1-2-3, Javelin Plus, and custom built decision support models.

This lead to a desire to upgrade to a "real" machine and relegate the trusty old Atari to a kid's game machine. Being the frugal sort, I always resisted this temptation by making my Atari a more robust machine with every conceivable upgrade possible, ranging from the Newell 256K XL memory upgrade including the Ramrod XL operating system with 80 Column upgrade and two US Doubler equipped 1050s. But, no matter whether I added extra memory or 80 columns in Atariwriter Plus+ or double density drives, I still did not have IBM compatibility.

IBM Invades the Home

As the price of IBM clones dropped, more and more co-workers were buying their first PCs or scrapping their C64s for the new clones. Eventually, I became the outcast and was looked upon as being the strange one for not being able to take work home. Once again, I was faced with the prospect of scrapping an investment of over $2500 in hardware and software and years of accumulated knowledge about the intricacies of applying the 8bit Atari to productivity applications.

I was almost ready to make the plunge to the IBM world when I noticed an ad in Antic Magazine for the Happy 7.1 Upgrade and software claiming that it gave IBM file compatibility to the 8bit Atari without resorting to null modem cables or telephone hook-ups. Also, Happy dropped their price from $249.95 to $99.95 (does this say something about the life cycle of 8bit products?) which made the decision easier.

I promptly called up my friendly mail order house because no local merchants stocked the product. By the way, it's getting harder to find any 8bit products on store shelves in the Detroit area. Anyway, less then a week later the man in the "Big Brown Truck," UPS to those of you without kids, delivered my Happy 1050 Upgrade, Happy Disk Controller, and Version 7.1 software.

Being a hardware hacker made installation a simple matter for me, no soldering or desoldering required. But if you can't tell the difference between a Phillips screwdriver and a floppy disk, you might want to find someone to do the installation for you.

After printing out the documentation, I was eager to translate an Atari file into IBM format so I could take it to work and see if this thing really worked. Much to my chagrin, I discovered the Happy cannot format IBM disks, so the test had to wait.

Formatting disks for use with the Happy 1050 must be done from the MS-DOS machine using the Format A:/1 command because the 1050 is single-sided and the IBMs, except some early PCs are double-sided. After formatting a supply of disks on the IBM machine, I proceeded to make copies of files from the Atari to the IBM and visa versa.

My objective in this whole process was to be able to transfer numeric data between Syncalc and Lotus 1-2-3 and textual data from Atariwriter Plus to IBM readable ASCII text files.

The latter proved easy once I learned to use the "Save ASC" option from Atariwriter Plus and use the "Text Translation = Yes" Option in the IBMXFR program supplied by Happy. The resulting text files on the IBM had none of the text formatting options they had in Atariwriter Plus. My IBM word processor, Volkswriter, was able to load the files with only one problem. That is, any imbedded print characters in the files such as Cntl-U for underlining caused the data within the print codes to be garbled in the translation. Removing all of the embedded characters with Atariwriter Plus before saving the files in ASCII format solved the problem, but it does make compatibility a little less complete because the necessary formatting commands must then be reentered in the IBM file.

The Syncalc translation process proved to be much more complicated. My first attempts were with DIF files created by Lotus 1-2-3 version 2.01. The Happy IBMFXR program translated them OK, but when I tried to load them into Syncalc using the Load-Data Option, weird things happened -- only part of the file came through and some of it was garbled. Going from a Syncalc DIF to Lotus 1-2-3 worked fine, but I couldn't go from 1-2-3 to Syncalc.

A little bit of research turned up the fact that with Version 2.01 of 1-2-3, Lotus made some changes in the way the program's Translate Utility creates DIF

files. To be more explicit, in version 2.01 of Lotus, the Translate Utility ignores all non-needed blank cells when creating a DIF file. This is different from the previous versions of Lotus and other programs that account for all the cells in a range including the blank cells when creating the DIF file.

Help was on the Way

Anyway, a way around this problem was suggested in the June 1987 issue of Lotus Magazine on page 132. To create an old style DIF file in Lotus 2.01, use the following procedure from within 1-2-3:

1) Retrieve the file to be translated.

2) Put a label-prefix apostrophe in cell A1 — type an Apostrophe hit Enter.

3) Copy A1 to the entire relevant portion of the spreadsheet as follows: /C From A1 Push Return -To A1..(Type period) Push End Key, Push Home Key.

4) The file will look erased but you will notice that a label-prefix apostrophe has been placed in each cell of the relevant portion of the spreadsheet.

5) Re-load the original file using the File Combine, Copy, Entire File method.

6) Re-save the file under a new name. This yields a file with no non-blank cells for the Translate Utility to ignore.

7) Translate this new file to DIF using the Lotus Translate Utility and your single-sided Atari readable disks. The new file will load into Syncalc with no problems.

One point that must be made is that spreadsheets transferred Syncalc spreadsheets will not run in Lotus 1-2-3 and visa versa. The documentation supplied with the Happy 7.1 Software makes this clear. Using the DIF files described above is only a way of transferring data between programs and not a way of transferring models between programs.

As far as program compatibility goes, it may be possible to move Visicalc models from the IBM to the Atari and use Syncalc's translate utility to get them into the Atari. This of course assumes that there are people still out there using Visicalc on the IBM PC. In general, if you are really looking for complete compatibility between your work-based IBM and your Atari 8bit, the Happy 7.1 Upgrade will not serve your needs. You'll have to go out and buy a clone or an ST to get full program compatibility.

Working at Home on the 8bit

This limited compatibility didn't hinder me from getting utility out of the program because the applications I was attempting to coordinate between the two machines involved only the exchange of data and not the transfer of models.

In other words, if you want to be able to write a memo on your Atari at home over the weekend and then take the disk in to work and print it out and distribute on your IBM on Monday, then the Happy 7.1 Upgrade is for you. If, on the other hand, you are developing a capacity planning model in Lotus 1-2-3 and want to be able to see your kids before they go to bed, your choices are more limited, either buy a clone or an ST or learn to work late.

My own applications point up a limitation that you have on the Atari 8bit, for productivity programs, that you don't have on more robust machines like the IBM. Namely, I go on-line with Dow Jones News Retrieval and download stock prices and news headlines about a certain group of companies. This data is entered into a Lotus 1-2-3 spreadsheet that does some calculations on the data and serves as a base for editing the news headlines and finally is used to print out a report. In Lotus, I can import my downloaded ASCII data directly into the spreadsheet. I can't do that with Syncalc.

In Syncalc, I must type in the numeric portion of the data directly into a spreadsheet model, then print the file to disk. This file can be loaded into Atariwriter Plus and then merged with the rest of the downloaded file which Atariwriter Plus can load and edit. This resulting file can then be converted into IBM format for distribution.

It would be nice if Syncalc would allow you to import ASCII text files into a spreadsheet thus saving an extra step that is not required on the IBM PC. If anyone knows of any utilities that can translate ASCII text files into DIF, Syncalc, or Visicalc format, I would like to hear from you.

Making Backups of Software

One other feature of the Happy 7.1 Upgrade you might want to consider before you purchase it is its obvious ability to make backup copies of your protected software. If you are like me, all of the productivity programs that I use regularly are copy protected and in many cases the manufactures are going out of business, merging or simply not distributing their products locally anymore.

This means it is becoming increasing important to have backups of your software because if you destroy your original disk, it might be next to impossible to easily replace it in these days of sparse 8bit software availability.

The Happy 7.1 Upgrade performs this task admirably even on the Synapse software where it has to use PDF files to make copies that only run on a Happy equipped drive. Even with these limitations, it is nice to know I now have backups for my protected disks.

In conclusion, now that you are aware of the limitations of this product, if it still looks like something that will fill your needs for limited IBM file compatibility, then I heartily recommend you buy the Happy Version 7.1 Upgrade. After all, $99.95 is still a lot cheaper than the $999 needed to get into an acceptable XT clone machine that is also being made obsolete by the boys from Big Blue.

Business Software for the ST -- Financial +Plus and RoloBase+Plus

by Steve Mileski (GLASS)

Financial+Plus, $199, and Rolobase+Plus, $39.95, are available from Equal Plus, Inc., PO Box 160626, Austin, Texas, 78716-0626, (512) 327-5484.

When asked to review a financial package for the ST, I guess I was thinking more along the lines of a home budget-type system. But, when the UPS man delivered Financial+Plus and Rolobase+Plus software from Equal+Plus Software, I soon realized here was a chance to try some "real" productivity software for the ST.

Financial+Plus is an integrated accounting system which includes 1) General Ledger, 2) Accounts Payable, 3) Accounts Receivable, and 4) Payroll, including printing of checks and forms which can be customized, provide aging and finance reports on the accounts receivable and provide for W-2s at year's end for employees.

Rolobase+Plus is a comprehensive RoloDex-type database that can print labels, filecards, postcards and envelopes. Its data can be imported from your Financial+Plus package or other "relative record" text files. Printouts can be sorted by country, zip code and name. Data can be selected by b)usiness, p)ersonnel, or a)ll. Data can also be selected by key words that were inserted into the records.

So, On with the Review

The first software tried was Financial+Plus. The plastic, hinged case and thick documentation certainly looks impressive. Opening the book before booting the disk gave me a secure feeling of well-written and understandable software. The manual began with an overview of the double entry bookkeeping system and accounting practices. Now I just had to get the package on my hard-drive and have a go at it.

Two hours go by. There seems to be a definite need for better explanation of initial installation on a hard-drive system, although it certainly does have the ability. Finally after fumbling around with the system utilities, I get it to work on my SH204. FIN+PLUS does support single-drive, dual-drive, and hard-drive systems, but why anyone would want to try this package on floppies is beyond me. There's just so much file accessing the wait time would leave me sitting on the edge of my chair.

At this point I must add that, for a reason I'm still not totally sure of, a folder with no name appeared on the hard-drive that seemed to point to the root-directory. Feeling uncomfortable about this, I zeroed out that partition and reloaded it from my backup. This also happened while trying it on the floppy disks. As an observation, the disk came with 42 files including the program EP.PRG, DESKTOP.INF and CONTROL.ACC files. The support files had cryptic names like F0000001.GAO, F0050000 and F0080176.ITO, and nowhere in the documentation could I find a reference to the purpose or function of any of them. Also, data files generated by the program (17 of them in a test run for one small company with 2 employees, 2 vendors, 2 clients, and 2 payees) were similarly named.

Running Financial+Plus

The Program operated flawlessly. Considering all of the I/O calls for support files, it even ran surprisingly fast. It uses on-screen menus to take you to the various areas like Enter Transaction, Print or Post Journal, Print Financial Statements, Management Reports & Queries, Customize Financial Plus, Exit To Main Menu, and Exit To Desktop.

The menu items can be selected by typing in the menu number, pointing to the item with the mouse, or using the mouse on a pull-down menu from the menu bar. The menu path taken is indicated at the top of the screen like; 4,2,1 meaning item 4 on the first menu screen, 2 on the second, and 1 on the last. Rapid menu transit can be utilized just by typing 4,2,1 (or whatever) if you know what combination takes you where you want to go. For instance, 1,1,1 is the path to take you to Customer Invoice & Refunds. A chart of the available paths would have been a handy addition to the documentation.

Backing up the menu tree is done with the 'esc' key, with one press for every level deep. However, if you got three levels deep with the combination entry (see 1,1,1, above) then the 'esc' key would take you back to the beginning of the combination.

The program is very easy to use and understand if you are familiar with double-entry bookkeeping. Even the withholding tax tables are easy to modify to adjust to the whims of the Internal Revenue Service and state and local tax systems. The reports, checks, invoices, and W-2s looked great and can be customized. Reports generated even include Point Of Sale Invoicing, Account Receivable Aging, and Accounts Receivable Finance Charges.

Documenting the packages

The documentation, as mentioned earlier, was excellent. Chapter 1 (An Introduction to Financial Plus, 39 pages) included a trial run on their sample company, named "ABC." Chapter 2 (Converting Your Books, 71 pages) provided for a logical step-by-step set of procedures to do just that, including a required list of items from your present set of books. Chapter 3 (Operating Procedures, 83 pages) included a suggested records back-up method and item by item description of all transactions procedures. Chapter 4 (Periodic Routines, 4 pages) assisted you with the Daily, End-of-Period, Quarterly, Calendar, and Fiscal Year routines.

Chapter 5 covered Error Messages, all four of them, on two pages. Chapter 6 (Security Management, 5 pages) discussed how to provide for various levels of access for your personnel, assigned by password and i.d. number. Chapters 7 and 8 cover miscellaneous operations and the system user guide for specifying the configuration of the forms, disk drives, printer, and directory paths.

The appendices included setting up Financial Plus on the cash or accrual system, a glossary of terms, and sample reports (18 of them). Finally, the Index, which proved, to me, to be very easy and helpful. The program is a port-over from the PC world and does not allow you access to the desk accessories. For the quality of programming, I would like to see the programmer write a true ST GEM version.

Rolobase+Plus looked, felt, and operated very much like Financial+Plus with the menus and options. Again, it operated flawlessly and quickly, and had the batch of cryptic named files.

People used to the IBM operating environment will be well pleased with these packages and feel quite comfortable with them. ST'ers, on the other hand, have become used to a more convenient GEM system and would probably prefer to keep access to the true menu bar with the accessories, and may elect to wait for a true ST package of this type or commit themselves to the change over to this type when it became available.

The Bottom Line

So, how would I rate this package? If you have a business, small or medium, and need a "bug free," comprehensive accounting package, this will definitely do the job. If a dummy like me (with one high school accounting course) could understand and use it, with the guidance of the documentation, you accounting types will do great! On a scale of 1 to 10, I give it a 9+.

As a final note, to my chagrin, neither of these packages will work properly with TURBO-ST, which could help greatly with all of the necessary screen scrolling and text updating.

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Alpha Systems' Magniprint II+

by Bob Retelle (MACE,WAUG)

Your computer's printer, if it's like mine, is probably one of those often neglected "work-horse" pieces of hardware. It's there when you need it, and it gets the job done, but it usually doesn't get to have any fun of its own.

Well, Alpha Systems has come to the rescue of bored printers everywhere, with "Magniprint II+." This program lets you print out Atari 8bit graphics from a wide selection of sources in an amazing variety of ways. You can print pictures in sizes ranging from small "quicky" printouts, to giant wall-sized posters, in full color, or even on T-Shirts!

While the program includes many outstanding features, probably one of the *best* is the company behind it. Originally released almost six years ago, Magniprint has gone through many changes on its way to the Version 4.1 that was tested for this review.

Quoting from the letter which accompanied our review copy of Magniprint, "At Alpha Systems, we believe that a product is never really finished, that it is never the best it could be. There is always something more it could do, some way it could be better...We believe in continuously supporting our customers and encourage all current Magniprint owners to take advantage of our upgrade offer." If you own an earlier version, all you have to do is send back your original disk, along with $10, and you will receive the newest revision, complete with documentation.

Speaking of the documentation, Magniprint II+ comes with a well-written and very complete 53-page manual. It first gives you an introduction to all the features of this version and then takes you through a tutorial on setting up your printer and exploring the printing options. The disk comes set up for Epson/Star printers, but allows you to change the printer driver to match your printer. Once you've selected your printer, the change is written to the disk, so you only have to go through this step once.

The Magniprint disk includes several pictures in different Graphics modes, so you can experiment with the printing options right away. Pictures can be printed in a "draft" mode, which will give you an idea of how they will look, as either a positive or negative print. The pictures can be printed out in various sizes up to a full sheet of paper, or sections of a picture can be "zoomed" up to fill a full sheet. The printout can be made horizontally or vertically on the page and can be printed normally or as a "negative."

In addition to the actual printing options, Magniprint II+ allows you to add text to your pictures, in either the normal system typeface or in a font you can load from the disk. The program uses the standard 9-sector Atari font file, so you can also use alternate character sets you've created with font editors. The text can be any of four different sizes, so you can add titles to the pictures, or create signs and posters from your pictures.

A very nice "touch" is the touch-up mode. Many times a picture, especially digitized photos from ComputerEyes, may have a flaw here and there. Magniprint II+ allows you to "retouch" the picture before printing it. This feature is not a substitute for the full drawing functions of a "paint" program, but it can definitely make a difference in the appearance of the final printout.

On some printers, the printout can be centered automatically as it is printed, and there is also a "mirror" mode which flips the picture over, and prints it "backwards." This is intended to be used with "thermal transfer" ribbons which will allow you to make your own "iron on" transfers, direct from your computer!

You can scroll the picture on the screen both horizontally and vertically, and even save the picture back to disk in compressed Koala format. While not originally intended to be used this way, Magniprint II+ gives you the ability to convert many different graphics file formats into the popular Koala .PIC format.

Probably the most well-known, and most *fun*, function of Magniprint is the ability to create *poster* size printouts of your computer pictures. Unfortunately, the manual doesn't tell what the actual dimensions of the posters will be, but the "medium" sized poster I printed was about three feet square, and a "small" one about half that size, so I'd imagine a "large" poster would be about six by six feet (No, I haven't tried a full sized poster yet. While the results are very good, it does take a looooooong time to print!).

There is one tiny little improvement I'd like to see in the program, just by way of "nitpicking." The program creates the large poster size printouts by dividing the picture up into "strips" which are just the width of your paper. It then prints each strip on as many sheets of paper as are needed for the size you specified, with each strip separated by a blank sheet of paper. The process is fully automatic and doesn't require you to do anything once you've started the printout (other than wait!). If you tear the strips apart carefully when the printing is done, it's fairly easy to piece the poster together. However, if you're like me, and wait until the last minute before a computer club meeting, then end up grabbing the poster strips out of the printer as you run out the door, you may find assembling the poster may be a bit of a "puzzle."

It took a few minutes of turning, rearranging and standing back squinting at the picture to get it all put together properly. (Our past-president, Don Neff, wandered by, looked at the garble of dots on the paper and said "Oh yes, my printer used to do that sometimes.") At any rate, I wish the program would print some kind of identification of which strip is which, and which way was "up" on the sheets in between the strips. Other than that, I found very little else to complain about!

Not only does Magniprint II+ give you this wide range of printing options, it also gives you an amazing array of picture types that you can print. While Koalapad and Atari Touch Tablet format pictures are the only format that can be loaded directly, the program will convert other graphics formats for you. The menu of formats you can use includes: Micro-Painter, Micro Illustrator, Paint, Fun With Art, B/Graph, Graphic Master, Super Sketch, Strip Poker, Movie Maker backgrounds, Graphics Magician, Atari Graphics Light Pen, Print Shop, Syngraph, ComputerEyes and Typesetter Sketch Pad Icon.

Pictures can be printed from Graphics modes 8 and 9 and from Antic mode "E" (sometimes called mode 7.5), the four color high resolution mode used by Koala pictures. Magniprint also will convert among these modes for you at the press of a single key. When you print a picture in the multi-color mode, Magniprint will allow you to select the shading of the four colors. This will allow you to "fine-tune" the printout for each picture. The program uses different patterns of dots for each shade of grey, so your printouts can actually end up looking better than they did on the screen. It may take some experimentation with this feature to get the best results when adjusting the colors in this way, but the final results can be well worth the effort.

Alpha Systems has also provided BASIC program subroutines that you can include in your own BASIC programs to capture pictures from within your programs. This way you can easily make printouts of the screens your programs generate.

There are many variations on some of the features, and others I'm sure I've missed. This is one of those programs with new things to be found every time you run it!

Also included on the Magniprint disk is a printing utility called "PRINTALL." This allows you to print out your BASIC program listings *exactly* the way they appear on the screen, including all those "unprintable" graphics and control characters. If the BASIC program includes a machine code subroutine in a string, PRINTALL will print it to paper, just as it appears on your screen, rather than making your printer go berserk.

So go ahead and make your printer happy this Holiday season! Buy it a copy of Magniprint II+ and it won't be bored again!

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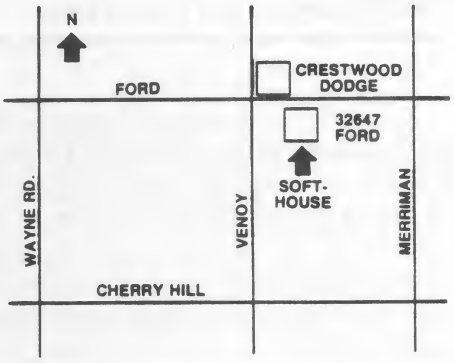

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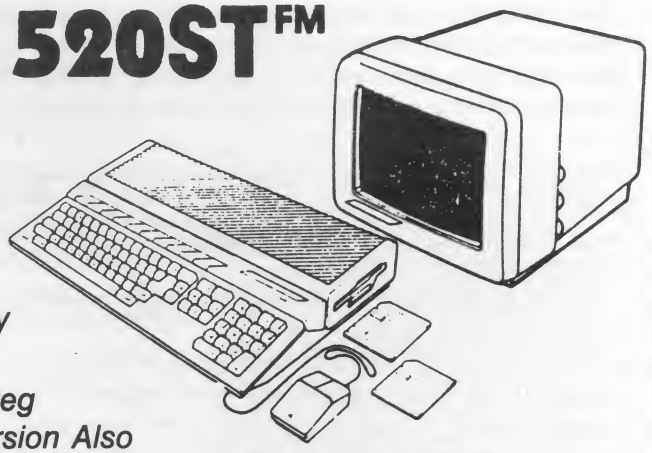

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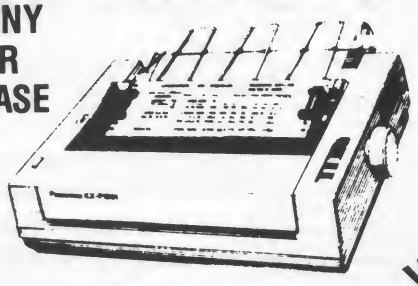

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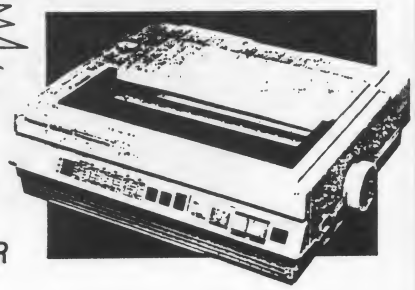

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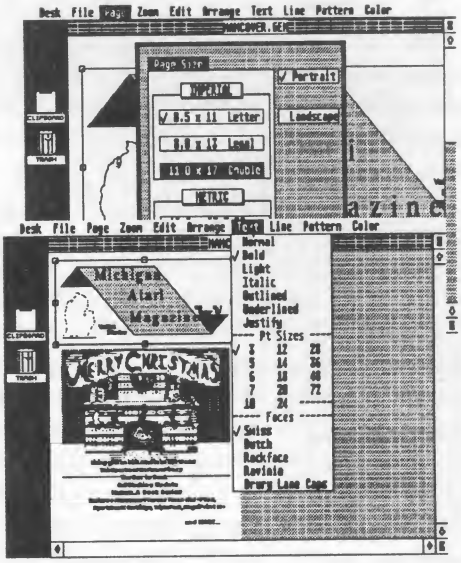
ST Graphic Manipulation made Easy -- A look at Drawing Utilities from Migraph



by Bill Rayl

Over the next few months, we're going to be taking a look at the many fine products produced by Migraph, Inc. This article focuses on SuperCharged Easy-Draw.

Migraph first introduced Easy-Draw way back in early 1986. An object-oriented drawing program with text and graphics capabilities, the program quickly became an integral part of many ST desktop publisher's toolkits. However, the program, and the features it contains, is superbly suited to a variety of tasks, including advertising layout/design and architectural drawing.

Unlike most drawing programs for the ST, Easy-Draw treats each individual piece of the picture is treated as an independent object, which can be moved and resized with ease. This approach also allows you to superimpose objects onto one another, with the option of making overlapping object transparent. This is a real plus for creating three dimensional artwork or complex architectural models.

The documentation for Easy-Draw consists of a 143-page manual, complete with tutorials, helpful hints and a 15-page Index. The SuperCharged versions of Easy-Draw (version 2.0 to the current version 2.3) contains over 40 pages of documentation for SuperCharger and a 23-page addendum to the main manual, explaining the new features in the main program using the bit-image capabilities. The documentation is all well written and very helpful in teaching the ins and outs of this package, and it all fits nicely into the sturdy three-ring binder.

Fully GEM-based and well-designed, the program was definitely designed with the user's convenience in mind. All the drawing tools are contained in a Pop-up menu which, at the click of the right mouse button, "magically" appears at the very spot at which you are working! After selecting the drawing tool you wish (such as Box, Circle, Ellipse and a number of lines, arcs and wedges), a click of the left mouse button removes the "toolbox" and allows you to get down to work. The drop down menus along the top of the screen let you set rulers and the background grid, viewing size of the page, line and fill patterns, et cetera.

The Easy-Draw desktop contains your work window — a standard GEM window minus a close box that usually appears in the upper left corner — a clipboard and a trashcan. A second window may be opened, and you can copy objects from window to window simply by selecting and dragging the object. The clipboard allows you to temporarily cut an object from the page, with the ability to move elsewhere in the window (via the scroll bars) and then paste the object back onto the page. Deleting an object is as simple as selecting it and 1) dragging it to the trashcan, 2) choosing the Delete command in the Edit Drop-down menu or 3) hitting the Delete key. Until the trashcan is actually emptied, the deleted item can be recovered using the Edit Undelete command or by hitting the Undo key.

Once an object has been created, Easy-Draw has a number of powerful editing capabilities, allowing you to rotate, stretch, flip or create a mirror image of the graphic. When used in conjunction with Migraph's Easy-Tools, the subject of the next article in this series, the editing features give you all the power you'll probably ever need.

Easy-Draw allows importing of ASCII text or typing of text directly into a text frame. The text can be set in a variety of point sizes and attributes, such as bold, italic, light, outlined, underlined, justified, or any combination of these. With version 2.0 and up, GDOS fonts are used, such as those used by Timeworks DTP. That means, if you know how to modify the ASSIGN.SYS file, you can add other GDOS fonts, some of which are in the public domain. [Ed: For more information on GDOS, an excellent article by Douglas Wheeler is available on the major information services and local BBSes, usually under the name GDOSHELP.]

The SuperCharged version of Easy-Draw allows importation of Degas, Degas Elite, NeoChrome, MacPaint and .IMG pictures via the SuperCharger program. SuperCharger gives you the option of remapping color pictures to black and white, using four methods: map to black, auto-mapping using a 2x2 matrix of four pixels to represent each pixel of the original picture, auto-mapping 4x4 and table-mapping 4x4.

Mapping to black allows you to: map all colors to solid black while leaving all white areas unchanged; map all colors that are approximately 30 percent black to solid black and the rest to white; map only colors that are over 70 percent black to solid black and all else to white.

The two auto-mapping features often give excellent results for digitized and scanned images or low-res pictures with a lot of color. Though these methods take considerable more time (and memory) to convert the picture, the enhanced output is well worth the extra effort.

If the auto-mapping features still don't give you what you want, using table-mapping allows you to select the patterns SuperCharger will use to remap the imported image.

Once your page has been produced, you can print it by selecting the Output option in older versions of Easy-Draw, choosing Output in the new SuperCharged versions or by executing the Output/Outprint programs from the desktop. Users of Timeworks DTP or PageStream publishing programs also have the option of directly integration of Easy-Draw files into their documents. This makes Easy-Draw an excellent addition to the desktop publisher's program library. If using Easy-Draw to print you pages, on other than an Epson-compatible 9-pin printer, you may need to buy additional drivers from Migraph.

If any of the features of Easy-Draw sound like something you could use, I highly recommend you buy this package. Not only will you get an outstanding product, you will also get friendly and knowledgeable help from the Migraph staff at their technical support line.

They are very dedicated to supporting their products and have been extremely helpful and courteous. When we've contacted them when we had a problem with one of the three supplied disks what come with SuperCharged Easy-Draw, Migraph quickly come to the rescue. Within a week, three new disks were delivered to us at no additional charge. None of the programs are copy-protected and hard drive installation is a breeze — the manual even gives you step-by-step instructions on putting Easy-Draw on to your hard disk.

SuperCharged Easy-Draw requires 1 meg of RAM and is available on single or double sided formats. The package also comes with an accessory allowing Degas or IMG snapshots of your screen for later importation into SuperCharged Easy-Draw.

If you're looking for a program allowing you to create professional graphic-oriented flyers and documentation, take a good look at Easy-Draw. Chances are, you won't look any farther!

SuperCharged Easy-Draw (ver. 2.3) lists for $149.95. Easy-Draw (ver. 2.3) lists for $99.95, and owners may upgrade to SuperCharged Easy-Draw for only $49.95 with the return of the original disks. Owners of older versions of Easy-Draw may upgrade to version 2.3 (without SuperCharger) for only $32.

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MuZap! The game that teaches music

by Patricia Snyder-Rayl

Haven't heard of MuZap? No worry, since the music teaching program was unveiled at the Toronto Atari Users Convention at the beginning of November and is not available from a US distributor.

The program was a smash hit, with Philippe Therien, the creater of the software, almost constantly busy demonstrating it for fasinated show-goers. His booth was so busy and filled with people, it was difficult for me to get a chance to talk to him.

MuZap is a new idea in teaching children and adults to read music. I say adults as well because, as the manual says, "The game includes different levels of difficulty, different tempos (speeds) and different keys. Hence it is designed for all types of player, young and old, musicians and non-musicians alike."

I saw children thrilled at playing the software at the Toronto show, and I know it helped me brush up on my very rusty music skills. I used to play the flute in high school as well as having two years formal piano lessons, but I don't care to say how many years ago that was! This program was easy to use and more than a little entertaining as I worked on my music skills.

The basic premise is very simple. There is a treble and bass staff at the top of the screen, and a set of piano keys toward the bottom of the screen. On the piano keys is a little rocket, which is moved with the mouse. Your object is to fire at the notes as they come across the staffs before they fall and crack your keys. You only have three keys (lives) to replace the ones which get cracked when you make a mistake. To fire on the note and "blow it away," you need to place the rocket on the right key (in the right octive) and press the mouse button.

This seems simple enough, until you realize that not only do you have to guess the correct note, but some notes travel across the screen faster than others! Whole notes travel the slowest, and sixteenth notes travel the fastest. In other words, the movement of the notes gives an visual indication of the note's actual duration if it was played.

So, you've got that part of the game down, eh? Well, just about then, MuZap throws two notes at you at once, instead of only one. I was really having trouble keeping up with four notes at a time! (Ok, so I started at beginner level!)

Once your three spare keys are gone, your turn is ended. The program keeps a record of your past work and compares it to how you do in the future. If there is more than one person using the software, the program will compare how you do against the other users.

There are two parts to the software: speed reading and ear training. I already told you about the speed reading. There are two parts of speed reading as well — random notes and melody. Random notes just sends over notes as the computer thinks of them. Melody displays the notes of a melody, and you have to keep up with the notes. Ear training is for those people who can pick the melody, but don't know how to read music. With this option, the computer plays a tone, tells you the name of the note, and you have to press the mouse button on the correct key. Random is hard enough, without having to try to learn the melody by ear!

You can chose beginner or advanced settings, the key signature and the speed settings. The program asks for your name before you can play, and gives you notes of encouragement if you don't do as well as you've done in the past, and also praise when you do the best yet.

There are 50 melodies of varing difficulty, from christmas songs to children's songs to traditonal and classical melodies. If you don't want to play them yourself, you can have the program play them for you, either one at a time, or "concert" where the computer goes through the songs and plays them for you.

Because the software was developed in Canada, the program boots up a selection box asking you to chose French or English. The manual is also written in both languages, and read as a "flippy" where one cover starts the English and the other cover starts the French version.

This program has something to offer the whole family and music lovers in general. If you have always wanted to learn to play the piano and read music, you couldn't find a better educational package. MuZap is available from Philos Software, Inc. Box 1322 PO DesJardins, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4G 1B5. Philippe Therien is asking $49.95 plus $5 shipping and handling for MuZap. Please make funds payable in Canadian currency or call (514) 766-6029.

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The SpartaDos X Cartridge

by Keith Joins (MACE)

(Special thanks is given to Bill Aycock, another beta tester, for his assistance in editing and making corrections to this review.)

By the time you read this, the SpartaDos X cartridge, a long awaited release from ICD, should be on sale. The people who brought us the MIO, the US doubler and the disk-based version of SpartaDos have now given us a DOS so fast and powerful that once you use it, you will never want to replace it with any other DOS currently available. After having used SDX for over two months while beta testing it, I can't understand how I ever survived without it.

The cartridge itself is similar in appearance to the R-Time 8. It is easily opened so you are able to replace the socketed ROM. This is a fairly simple procedure. I have done it twice and if I can do it, anyone can. This will be the method used for any future upgrades — no soldering, thank you!

The cartridge allows for piggy-backing another cartridge, such as the R-Time 8, Action!, BXE, MAC-65, etc. I am using it with a MIO and the XE adapter. Tom Harker of ICD has said they are looking into manufacturing some type of adapter for the XL to avoid the need to stack as many as three cartridges in the XL slot.

The cartridge is packed with 64K of code. There is no disk needed with SDX as all of the external command files are resident in the cartridge and load with amazing speed. The DOS is totally relocatable! The need for this will become apparent as you become familiar with SDX. It is this relocatability that has caused the long delay in completing SDX. Anyone who has ever tried to write an application program that is relocatable, let alone a system program, can appreciate the magnitude of this project.

Now let's take a look at some of the new features of SpartaDos X. Something that you have to learn at once is that there is now a new set of identifiers. The first one you learn is CAR:. This is the cartridge itself. We can issue the command DIR CAR: and get a directory of the cartridge as follows:

Volume: Cart 4.0 Directory: MAIN

- SPARTA SYS 7072 8-24-88 4:01p
- MENU COM 6688 8-25-88 12:01p
- COMMAND COM 4723 8-25-88 12:03p
- INDUS SYS 2498 8-11-88 5:09p
- ARC COM 3289 8-24-88 5:26p
- X COM 1999 8-24-88 4:01p
- ATARIDOS SYS 1815 8-24-88 4:02p
- CAR COM 1600 8-24-88 4:01p
- CACHE SYS 1224 8-23-88 9:53a
- UNERASE COM 1056 8-24-88 9:55a
- TD COM 1016 7-22-88 12:07p
- RAMDISK SYS 1048 8-19-88 4:56p
- SIO SYS 970 8-16-88 5:34p
- FIND COM 831 8-25-88 12:53p
- CLOCK SYS 698 7-22-88 12:49p
- JIFFY SYS 614 7-25-88 10:48a
- DUMP COM 567 7-26-88 11:41a
- KEY COM 505 7-19-88 8:42a
- CHTD COM 372 7-26-88 11:47a
  CHVOL COM 298 7-12-88 9:10a
- RPM COM 388 8-25-88 1:50p
- RS232 COM 147 7-07-88 3:59p
- 0 FREE SECTORS

Remember this is the beta version and the directory entries might be different on yours, but not much. A number of the .COM files will look familiar to seasoned SpartaDos users. These are the external commands and they have the same functions in SDX as they did in the disk-based version.

The next new group of identifiers used is A: through I: (or 1: through 9:), which represent drives one through nine. DSK is now the identifier for the old D: and is always assumed. Therefore D: is no longer the default drive, but rather is drive four. So, you can reference drive one as 1:, D1:, DSK1:, or A: — your choice. The default drive is now just a colon (:) since a single D preceding a letter or a number is ignored.

Other identifiers are PRN: (the printer), CON: (the "console", or screen editor), and COM: (the RS232 port).

This takes a little getting used to, but becomes second nature after a bit. Any MS-DOS users will feel right at home. I learned CON: very quickly when attempting to create my first AUTOEXEC.BAT file (not STARTUP.BAT — more MS-DOS compatibility). I kept on trying to use the command: COPY E: AUTOEXEC.BAT. I'll let you figure out what happened!

These new identifiers can be accessed from Basic by preceding them with a 'D'. LOAD "DF:FILENAME" will load filename from drive six. Of course, you could still use LOAD "D6:FILENAME" also, so there's no problem with compatibility.

If you take a look at the CAR: directory again, you will see some files with the extender ".SYS." These are handlers that you can choose from to configure your system the way you want. SDX will

load several of these as a default configuration. SPARTA.SYS and SIO.SYS must always be loaded as they contain the actual SpartaDos disk driver and the SIO routines. The default configuration will also always load ATARIDOS.SYS and INDUS.SYS. ATARIDOS.SYS will allow you to access AtariDos type disks. INDUS.SYS will re-program any connected Indus or Happy-enhanced drives to enable high speed I/O. I have an Indus GT and this handler works great!

RAMDISK.SYS is the SDX ramdisk driver. You may install multiple ramdisks using any unused drive numbers in any size up to the total amount of available banked RAM. You specify the size of the ramdisk by entering the number of 16K banks to be used. For example: RAMDISK.SYS 8 2. This will set up a ramdisk as drive eight using 2 16K banks of RAM. The ramdisk will be formatted automatically unless you had previously installed the ramdisk with the same number and size before performing a cold start and without losing power to the RAM. This means that you can use the COLD command which re-boots the system and still retain the contents of your ramdisk. By the way, the ramdisk is formatted in double density.

CACHE.SYS, when installed, will use one 16K bank of extended RAM to add buffers to SPARTA.SYS to make floppies seem to run faster. This handler is not loaded as a default.

CLOCK.SYS and JIFFY.SYS are loaded dependent upon your system. If you have a R-Time 8 then CLOCK.SYS will load. Otherwise JIFFY.SYS will load as the default. One or the other must be used for any Time/Date commands.

Each of the handlers except INDUS.SYS takes up memory. Therefore you don't want to use any that aren't needed. To do this, you can set up a configuration file of your own. When SDX boots, it will check drive one for a file called CONFIG.SYS. If the file is present, SDX will use that file for the list of handlers to load. If there is no CONFIG.SYS file, then the defaults will be used. Booting with OPTION held down will override any disk-based CONFIG.SYS file and will use the default configuration. You can also choose what area of RAM SDX will use. The choices are OSRAM (RAM under the OS which is the default on a stock XL/XE), BANKED (expanded memory), or NONE (normal RAM which would usually be used only with a stock 800).

SpartaDos X now supports over 1,400 entries in a directory, a real blessing for hard disk users. There are now two valid directory name separators; the usual ">" has been joined by the MS-DOS "\". Also, SDX recognizes the MS-DOS MKDIR, CHDIR, and RMDIR commands, which are equivalent to the old style CREDIR, CWD, and DELDIR. Note that the longest path name allowed is still 63 characters.

There are several new commands available with SpartaDos X. The first of these is the ATR or Attribute command. This is really an enhancement of the old PROTECT and UNPROTECT commands which set or cleared a protection bit in the filename entry. The protection bit is now manipulated by the ATR command. You would use ATR +P FILE.EXT to protect a file, or ATR -P FILE.EXT to unprotect it. In addition, two new bits are available: the Archive bit and the Hidden bit. The Archive bit is cleared when a file is created or written to, and set when the file is backed up by a backup program, such as ICD's FlashBack! which supports it. The Hidden bit allows you to hide a file or directory so it can be loaded as a command only. Commands like DIR, COPY, and TYPE will not see these files unless you specifically include the attribute with those commands.

The RUN command has been eliminated, the thinking being that it was never used except to re-boot the system (with RUN E477). To take the place of this, the COLD command has been added. COLD by itself causes a reboot. There are also two options, C and N, which disable SDX and allow you to boot up a disk-based DOS such as Atari DOS or an older version of SpartaDos.

Users of SpartaDos will remember that you used the CAR command to return to the built-in Basic on your XE/XL or to the cartridge that you had installed. Since SpartaDos X does not dump you into Basic when it boots up but rather ends up at the DOS prompt, and since it can have another cartridge installed in it, you have two different commands available. The BASIC command will take you to the internal basic on the XE/XL machines. The CAR command will take you to whatever cartridge you have plugged into the SDX cart. In order to return to DOS without losing anything in the editor of whatever language you are using, it is necessary to have a type of MEM.SAV file for each command. These files can be established as part of your CONFIG.SYS file or from the DOS prompt.

The form for this is SET CAR=Dn:filename for the cartridge and SET BASIC=Dn:filename for basic. (The SET command is used to set various environment variables, of which CAR and BASIC are two.) While this feature may seem to be a regression, it is necessary due to the relocatable nature of the DOS.

CAR and BASIC are automatically set to I:CAR.SAV and I:BASIC.SAV when you boot up. You can change these assignments, but you also have the option of deleting them. If these variables do not exist, then the memory save feature will be disabled and either Basic or the cartridge will be entered cold. When calling DOS from either Basic or the cartridge, you will be given a warning if the memory save feature is disabled so you can save whatever you are working on to disk first.

I must admit at first I did not care for this feature. However using a ramdisk for this file makes the delay in saving and reading almost unnoticable. It also allows you to go from DOS to internal Basic to a cartridge without losing anything in memory! I have found it to be well worth the small delay it causes.

You can enter the cartridge or internal BASIC with the CAR and BASIC commands. Both these commands allow you to specify a filename with any needed parameters. The binary file so named will be run when the cartridge or Basic is entered. This is how, for example, you would run a compiled Action! program that requires the cartridge library.

[Editors' Note: Because of space limitations, we will run the second half of Keith's review in the January, 1989 issue.]

The Triple Pack

by Tim Feenstra (GRASS)

The evil Dictator is back, known now as "The Dragon," and he has taken several hostages. As Commander J. P. Stryker, you lead a commando paratroop group in an assault to free the captives. Jumping from a helicopter, your force is taken under fire from a machine gun. The advance causes loses, but once in range, the machine gun can be knocked out with a hand grenade, only to be replaced quickly with another one.

Once past the machine gun and in the sanctuary, you must provide cover fire as the hostages cross the courtyard. With tanks, trucks, trapdoors, and a soldier throwing rocks from above, the captives break for their freedom across the court. Those that survive are then flown off the island by copter, which must run the islands automatic defenses. Finally, you face The Dragon alone in the ancient caves below, for the final showdown.

Beach-Head II is a one or two player game in which you may play the allied commander or the dictator's evil forces in an animated commando scenario. It is the best of the three games that come in the Triple Pack package. The graphics are quite good, the movement of objects is pretty smooth and the action is nonstop. You can also skip to any of the four screens to practice before taking on the entire game. Most of the game layout is new, and the four screens are not repetitious of each other. Game control is good (if your joystick isn't worn out). The main complaint is with only four screens to work with the game does run out of surprises fast.

Also included in the set is Beach Head and Raid Over Moscow. Beach Head also puts you in command of an assault force out to defeat the Dictator.

This time you start with the task of destroying the enemy air force, and then the navel fleet. To achieve a surprise attack, you will also have to run your fleet through a narrow channel that is mined and has torpedoes shot at intervals. If you do not wish the advantage of surprise, you will be awarded more points to engage and defeat the enemies forces, which will be more prepared for you then if you had surprised them.

Once ashore, you use tanks to assault the islands defenses and attempt to destroy the Dictators fortress. The five action screens of this game are very repetitious, with the shooting screens using the same action three times. The air and navel screens, being exactly the same, should have been combined to reduce the repetition and provide more of a challenge. The graphics aren't bad, but boredom sets in quickly. Easily mastered, this game will probably end up in the disk box with the cobwebs on it.

Raid Over Moscow, the third game, can easily be described in one word. ZAXXON. Upon starting, the game (playing the Russians, of course) launches a nuclear strike against the United States. To stop the attack, your first task is to launch your stealth fighter from the orbiting space defense station. Though not too difficult, this screen seems a little silly, for if I were to park my stealth up there, I would park it facing the exit door, wouldn't you? Anyway, once launched, using the strategic world overview, you proceed to the missile site that launched the strike. Once near the launch site, the second action screen lets you blast your way ZAXXON style to the silos. There are five silos, but if time is running out, just blast the large one in the center and the missiles will be destroyed. Do this two more times for the other launch sites and then you can attack the main control site in Moscow, if you caught the other three sites before they hit. Let the strike hit the US before you destroy the silos, and you get to do it again for that site.

Once in Moscow, you are put afoot to assault the defense center from behind a wall with a rocket launcher. Don't stay still for long or you get blasted by enemy troops or tanks. Blow the blue door in the defense center building and you're in the reactor room. The reactor will go critical mass and explode if you can destroy the maintenance robot that injects coolant into it. To do this, you use special discs, and you bounce them off the back wall to hit the robot from behind. Of course, the robot is going to defend himself, so don't stop in one place for long. Did I tell you each robot (yes, there are more than one) must be hit four times to be destroyed? Perhaps I mentioned you only have a limited number of discs? You can catch discs that don't hit the robots, but once they're gone, you go backwards a screen to fight your way into the defense center again (if you have any surviving men that is). One more thing, the last robot will be very angry with you. He will not keep the reactor cool. You can only escape the upcoming explosion by destroying the last robot in time to get away. The graphics are ok, but playing brings on a desire to play the above mentioned game.

In general, the box looked nice, but the instructions are the discount fanfold type, adequate to learn the games, but easily lost in any drawer that contains more than a few other instruction books. If you can find Triple Pack at a discount price, it should be money well-spent. I don't play arcade games much anymore, but I will keep my eyes open for a good deal on it to get Beach Head II. Use the other two games (and your old joysticks) when friends invite themselves over to play your new games.

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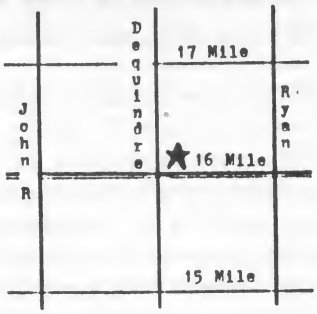

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Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts

CACE

Cascades Atari Computer Enthusiasts (CACE) is the Atari club in and around the Jackson County area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users and to promote the use of Atari computers in the community.

President	Brent Fisher	764-4599
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	782-0199
Treasurer	Craig Schaff	
Editor	Jim Boyce	522-4074

The current membership dues are $10 per year, or $14.80 if you wish to subscribe to Michigan Atari Magazine, and are payable at any of the CACE monthly meetings, or by mail. Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter. Any written communication with CACE or payments by mail should be sent to: CACE, P.O. Box 6161, Jackson, MI 49204. Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1 pm to approx. 4 pm. The meetings take place at the East Side Lounge, on the corner of Horton and Gansom Streets in Jackson, MI.

Fishin' Around by Brent Fisher

Good evening, or morning, or afternoon, or whatever time it is that you happen to be reading this. Congratulations are in order to Craig Schaff, as he is assuming the role of treasurer from Scott Boland. Scott is retiring from the post after three years of exemplary service to the club.

For next month's meeting, every paid member who shows up will receive a copy of the new Disk Of The Month. This also applies to anyone who shows up at the meeting and pays their dues on the meeting day. Which reminds me the next meeting will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 1 pm. Also check your address label — if it is circled in red your dues have expired. Special note to those of you who get your newsletter through MAM. There has been a price increase of five cents per issue to the user groups. This means that you will now be paying $14.80 per year instead of $14.20, not a bad deal when you consider what you get from the magazine.

This month I have to report Electronic Arts has canceled its support for the excellent word processor PaperClip, they will no longer be offering this excellent product for sale or offering any upgrades for it either. If they want to cancel games for us 8bit people that is one thing, but now they aren't even supporting application software. If anyone has comments on this send them to: Electronic Arts, 1820 Gateway Drive, San Mateo, CA 94404.

Last month Harold LaRue volunteered to put up a board if the club would help foot the phone bill. At the upcoming meeting we will be asking the attending membership to vote on whether club funds should be used to purchase a club modem. If anyone has a disk drive or a modem you are not using, please let the officers or Harold know.

By now most of you have either heard of or read about the ST-like operating system for the 8bits. Last month Scott Boland brought in a demo of GOE, Graphics Operating Environment that works with a ST mouse, keyboard or a joystick. Trust me, this is something that you should get a look at if you have an 8bit computer. Well, that is all for this month. See you at the meeting.

Just An Opinion by Jimmie Boyce

In the last issue I was criticized for complaining about the members' participation (or lack there of) in club projects and this type of complaining should be stopped because it is disturbing to the members. Quite frankly, I don't care about the sensitivity of the membership of CACE, any more than I care about the sensitivity of the citizens of Jackson. When a club dumps all of the responsibility on a few and does not and will not give any input or support as to what their needs are — then there is no club. So don't criticize me, tell me what you want this club to do for you, give me a direction to follow, give the hard working, caring leaders of this club an idea of what is needed and they will respond.

Treasurer's Report by Craig Schaff

For those few of you who weren't at the CACE November meeting, Scott Boland stepped down as Treasurer. I can't give you a "to-the-penny" account on how we are doing financially, but I can tell we are doing fine. I would like to thank Scott for doing a job very well done!! If you didn't know, Scott Boland had been the club treasurer ever since the CACE club was founded back in '85. From me and rest of the club members, past and present, thank you for a job VERY well done!!

Ask Tim by Tim Sharpe

The response to my request for letters last month has been overwhelming. Here are a few of them: I am interested in computer graphics. I was very impressed when Dan Rather showed an illustration of President Reagan's colon on the CBS Evening News. Was this illustration done with a computer? *[Rumor has it that it was indeed computer generated. Several programs have hit the market in response to the colon publicity, and two are available for Atari computers. The first is called "The Colon Generator" and is manufactured by Grodee Software. This program allows you to create, save and edit colon illustrations. The second program is a game called "Spot The Colon" by Isnothing-sacred Software. The object of the game is to find a colon using clues given you periodically throughout the program.]*

I hate your column. I hate you. You are a moronic imbecile, an idiot, and a fool. You're a disgusting, perverted, dull, boring, skeptical, tedious, fraudulent, vacuous person. What do you say to that? *[Me, skeptical? I seriously doubt that.]*

The 8bit CACE Virus by Tim Sharpe

So what's a computer virus, you say? Glad you asked. I would like to announce that I've created an annoying little 8bit bug that should help demonstrate what computer viruses are.

In the not-to-distant past, a computer program was always assumed to be a benevolent entity. But recently a new style of programming has become vogue: malicious programming. Enter the computer virus. The virus exists in different forms on different computer systems, but they are alike in several ways: 1) They are computer programs, 2) They go unnoticed by the user, 3) They are counter-productive.

And now, a little demonstration. You can obtain the virus program through the club library. It is called "VIRUS.OBJ." Copy this file to a diskette that has both DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS files on it. Rename the virus program to AUTO-

RUN.SYS. This allows the virus to load and operate undetected (like most do). After a few moments, BASIC should appear with its usual READY prompt. Now give BASIC a command such as LIST or PRINT "SO WHAT TIM" and hit the RETURN key. BASIC will quickly come back and give you an error, telling you you typed something wrong. Why? Because the virus is scrutinizing much of the input/output of the computer and randomly altering it. BASIC thought you mistyped because by the time it got the command, the virus had already tampered with it. Let's go to DOS and erase that pesky virus from the diskette. EGADS! What's this? A message telling me the virus will consider letting me go to DOS? After a few seconds, it will let you proceed to the DOS menu. But not without cluttering it up a little, just for spite.

Anything Goes by Craig Schaff

I'm sorry to report that our 'unknown hero' has left us. But he should be back in a month or two. It seems at that he has received his orders to go to a Top Secret location. Fortunately, it was rumored that it had something to do with computer-chemical warfare... yep, THE VIRUS!!! If you remember back a few months ago, our unknown heros instructor, Ronnie Ramdisk, had a terminal infection, will it turns out that IT was caused by the VIRUS!! It totally whipped out his memory!! If I hear any more from him I'll pass it on. Until then, Keep your fingers nimble.

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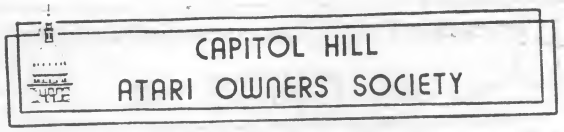


CHAOS is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of CHAOS.

Membership dues are $15.00 per year and entitles members to a 1-year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, and access to our libraries and other resources. Dues may be paid at any CHAOS meeting or by mail. If not using an official membership application, please include your name, address, phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and CHAOS invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106, 300/1200/2400 baud, 24 hours a day (Atascii/Ascii) serving both 8 and 16 bit Atari computers. Send inquiries regarding CHAOS, mail orders, memberships and so on, to:CHAOS, PO Box 16132, Lansing, MI 48901.

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8bit and 16bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. The S.T. INterest Group meets on the second Saturday of the month. The 8bit S.I.G. meeting, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. sharp and last until 1 p.m.. Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of coyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any CHAOS-sponsored function, including the club BBS.

The Presidential Address By Leo Sell

I hope you enjoyed the Colossal Computer Sale on December 3 and 4. Putting it together has been an interesting experience to say the least. While there are things I would do differently in the future, overall things went very well, and Lansing got a Computer Sale that has been sorely lacking. Special thanks to all of you who helped so much with the club tables. It takes a lot of effort and dedication to put forward a good image.

As some of you are well aware, numerous things are happening these days that affect the well-being and future of CHAOS. The key things, as always, require involvement of the membership. For instance, we need someone to get a hold of the Disk Library and turn it into the moneymaker it was. Our revenue has been down for a long time, and the library is a key to bringing it back up. The primary thing a person needs is ENTHUSIASM!!

Other important questions involve things outside the club. Namely, membership in the Michigan Computer Consortium and its required involvement in Energy Magazine, and whether to continue participating in Michigan Atari Magazine or to change to some other method of publishing a newsletter.

Michigan Computer Consortium

Let me address the Consortium question first. CHAOS was a founding member of MC2. Its primary purpose at the time was to publish a combined newsletter for all participating, local clubs (sound familiar??) and to disseminate information about the clubs to the mid-Michigan area. For several years, the consortium conformed to these common purposes to the benefit of all the clubs. Unfortunately, the purposes of the consortium never expanded much further. The present purposes of the consortium seem to be the MAXIT Show (primary) and production of Energy.

Some years ago, due greatly to financial problems, Energy

began to decline in the number of pages. For this, and other reasons, CHAOS approached other Atari clubs about producing a joint, Atari-specific newsletter. That joint effort started out as the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine and later became the Michigan Atari Magazine. As a result of our involvement in a newsletter better suited to meet our needs, we stopped involvement with Energy. Since we disagreed with the philosophy behind MAXIT and no longer participate in Energy, our involvement in the Consortium has been very limited (I don't go to meetings for meeting's sake). Despite the lack of common interest, we have remained a member of the consortium to better provide communication between CHAOS and the other clubs in the area.

Unfortunately, it appears the relationship must come to a close. MC2 has established a new policy requiring participation in Energy as a condition of membership in the consortium. According to PRESENT policy, it would cost the club $6 per year per active member to participate. While I do believe there is benefit to knowing about other clubs, machines and events, I cannot recommend participation. I asked the consortium if we could offer an option to those members who wish to receive Energy and thereby fulfill the requirement of participating in the magazine, but the policy they have adopted requires that it be received by all members. The alternatives then are nearly doubling our monthly newsletter expense, raising our dues, or declining further participation in the Michigan Computer Consortium. It is with regret that I have recommended the latter. Perhaps in the future, if the policy or our needs change we will be able to rejoin the Consortium. Until then, we will wish them goodwill and trust that our relationship will remain warm and positive.

Michigan Atari Magazine Problems

Another unfortunate issue involves further participation in Michigan Atari Magazine. Several recent events require that we consider alternatives. I'm not going to trot out a laundry list of the problems we have had over the past year or so. Suffice it to say that a pattern of behavior has been displayed that makes me very cautious about dealing any further with the present publishers of Michigan Atari Magazine. The biggest disputes relate directly to an question of ownership of the magazine. The questions I have the right to ask as an owner are not the same as those I may ask as a customer. When MMAM started, it was a collective effort of the clubs involved, collectively owned by those clubs. Collective ownership gave all of the clubs a voice in policies and procedures. Now, the present publishers claims ownership and therefore the right to set policy without question.

The result has been disputes over such things as reprinting articles from exchange newsletters, whether to print "Address Correction and Forwarding Requested," and my being refused proof of need this past summer when a price increase was *announced*. I emphasize the word "announced" because in at least one place the publishers claim they told user group presidents that "it looked as if there would be a cost increase of 15 cents per issue"... giving "two months to discuss the matter with their club." I don't often misunderstand statements — and I was told there *would* be (not might be) an increase. Other "regular" contact has been claimed but the only contact I have received has involved price increases or disagreableness.

Some disagreement is inevitable and can be overlooked. There comes a time, however, when things go too far. For me, it was when I asked the publishers for financial information regarding the need for the announced price increase. I was told in so many words it was none of my business. And yet, insultingly, much of the information I asked for was later published in ZMAG, an online magazine that covered much of this summer's dispute. This, and other discourtesies, finally caused me to rethink our relationship. In short, I now question the reliability and credibility of the publishers and the wisdom of continuing any further relationship with them.

A more disquieting issue is that of ownership. The present publishers now claim full ownership of Michigan Atari Magazine with all resulting authority and policy making power. Such was not the case when they took over the PUBLISHING duties of the magazine. Ownership was never transferred and yet they now claim it. To me, this is another issue of bad faith.

Several weeks ago, the first-ever meeting of all clubs participating in MAM took place. Some of these issues were discussed. But most time was spent on the ownership issue and the ensuing authority and policy questions. Furthermore, the publishers refused to agree to share any authority with the participating clubs and made a claim of ownership that I believe cannot stand up in court. Despite the misgivings of several of us, a proposal was put forth to bring the issue to a peaceful close. The publishers agreed to print the proposal in the December issue of the magazine. If they did so, you can read it in its entirety. Essentially, it is proposed the clubs relinquish all claims to ownership in return for membership on an advisory board and for a nonspecific guarantee of club pages in the magazine. The board would have no authority and would be solely advisory in nature.

As you may guess, I don't believe such an agreement is in the best interest of the participating clubs. To me, it is vitally important a collective magazine like MAM be controlled by the user groups participating. They might arrange for someone to do the actual publishing — but the groups set policy and have all authority. The present publishers of the magazine disagrees with my philosophy and insists on ownership and reserving all authority to itself. I cannot accept this. Therefore, I have recommended CHAOS withdraw from Michigan Atari Magazine as soon as an acceptable alternative is available.

The Future

Well, perhaps we will spearhead a new joint newsletter venture. Perhaps we will produce one only for ourselves. Perhaps participating in Energy will be to our advantage after all. In any event, we will endeavor to provide the highest quality we can within the constraints we are working with. One of those constraints is YOU. We will need involvement from more people to put out a high quality newsletter. From writing articles, to editing, to production, we will need your help. Feel free to pitch in!

President's Report by Jerry Cross

Just a few bits of news this month. Our trip to Toronto did not bring us much money in disk sales, but we did bring back a lot of interesting news and even some brand new products to show! Our booth was sort of ...blaahh, because it was next to impossible to get anything across the border. If it wasn't for the help of the Toronto Atari Federation, which hosted the show, I would not have had a booth at all. They were kind enough to supply me with an entire ST and 8bit system to demo our disks on. Thanks guys!

With luck, I will have an interesting demo at our next meeting. The Diamond Graphic Operating System (GOS), which gives 8bit users an ST-like desktop. It even allows you to take an ST mouse and connect it to your Atari 8bit system! Also, the Xformer II program for the ST. This program will allow you to connect an 8bit disk drive to your ST and run 8bit programs directly! With all this hardware/software switching it's going to be hard to tell which is the real ST or 8bit!

In other business, I am going to postpone the Saturday Workshops for a while. Attendance has been very poor, and it was not worth the time and effort put in by the few who attended. Besides, it wasn't fair to the community director to have to give up his Saturday to open the school for 3 hours for only a few people. If there is a demand for this in the future, we will start it again.

Finally some sad news. Faye Hanners, a long time GAG member, passed away last month. Faye has shared many of her graphic programming hints, and was especially good at picture dumps and other printer graphic applications. She taught us many, many things, and we will greatly miss her at our meetings.

That's it for this month, see you at the next meeting.

The Genesse Atari Group is a non-profit group of Atari Owners in and around Flint, Michigan. Our purpose is to provide assistance to users of Atari Personal Computers. This organization is not affiliated with Atari, Inc. GAG meets on the second Wednesday of the month at Neithercut School, located at 2818 Crestwood Dr. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome.

Membership is $15/year. For information, contact Jerry Cross at (313) 736-4544 or the FACTS BBS at (313) 736-3920.

For Sale:

Atari 104St with SC1224 Color Monitor and software. Only a year old. Price -- $750! Call (517) 832-7849.

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. in the Dewing Hall, room 305, on the Kalamazoo College Campus. Corner of Academy & Monroe. Dues are $25/yr.

President:	Frank Fellheimer	657-6106
Vice President:	Dan Youngs	
Treasurer:	Dave Bryant	
Librarian	Dale Vincent	
Archiver:	Dave Oldenburg	
SysOp	Alex Stevens	
	GKAUG BBS:	(616) 657-2665

Not so many at last month's meeting and there was much to see this trip out. We set up our 8bit system and did demos on "Gauntlet," "A Day at the Races," "Bop & Wrestle" and "Infiltrator." All very fine games and a pleasure to see available for the Atari.

We also had a demonstration of the Amiga 2000 computer with a 40Meg hard drive. A most impressive system. Resolution of pictures and games was something to see. We are always pleased to have other computer systems available for examination and demonstration. We have not yet offically provided other computer support but we would certainly make time available for other system users if they would like to join us.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 09 December 88. We will have additional demos available along with Analog #64 which was delivered last month with nothing on it.

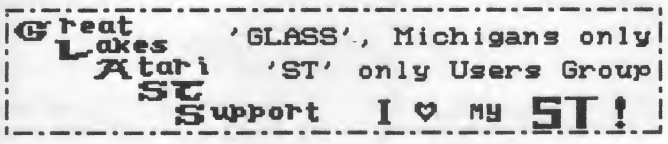
Dale Vincent has made a printed listing of our library and will include a listing on our BBS in the near future. Byrant/Oldenburg and myself spent about 5 hours working on the BBS. We have made (I hope) what we belive, to be several improvements. I hope you take the time to look. We are up to 50 users now, and have had callers from as far away as Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana.

Elections are coming up and it looks as if I will be able to take over as the president for another year, if elected. Dale Vincent may take over as the treasurer giving Bryant more time to work on programming, which we have had him doing most of last year anyway. We appreciate all the help he has given us in the past, and look forward to his help in the future.

We received programs from MAM magazine on our last visit to Ann Arbor and "Bop & Wrestle" and "Infiltrator" will be added to our library as soon as I can get the disks to our Librarian. I did the demo on them and then took them home with me....for shame!!

Please consider being an officer, there are many advantages to it and there really isn't all that much to it. I have enjoyed it, and have learned a lot. If you wish to be an officer, or participate in other activities, please let me know....I'll fix you up!! Looking forward to our next meeting.

Frank Fellheimer



GLASS Information: General Meeting, 1st Thursday every month at Athens High School, room 1528, 6 p.m. until 9:30 p.m., located in Troy, Mich., at 4333 John R Road, 1/10 mile north of Wattles (17 Mile). Guest are welcomed and encouraged to come! Planning Meeting, 2nd Thursday at same location. Members only. Mailing Address - GLASS, P.O. Box 99737, Troy, Mi., 48099 Phone - (313) 828-1653 (Steve Mileski, President) for info.

From The Desk Of The President...November 7, 1988

Did ya make it to the MIDI-Maze? Was it any good? Why am I asking these dumb questions?...because it hasn't happened yet. At least not as I'm writing this. By the time you read this though, it will be all over.

For a piece of humor (?) I'll tell you this is the second time I've written this article. The first time, after I was finished but before I had a chance to save it, the computer "hung-up" on me. We are talking BLACK SCREEN time, no bombs or nuthin'. Must be the electronic wizard's way of telling me it stank. Probably did too, cause most if it was about the coming GLASS elections. So, I will again mention them, but I won't drag on and on and on and on...

The gist of it was...It's time for all of you to consider stepping forward and nominate yourself or allow someone else to nominate you for one of our fine OFFICER positions. Help us have a choice. Running against a standing officer is not to say you feel they didn't do a good job, but rather, they did such a good job that you want to give it a try (and them a break). At the last meeting, when asked if I would run again, I replied, "This club will not go without a president." This does not mean I don't want to run for something else. I will always have a great deal of involvement in GLASS, it's like my family. Our treasurer, Emil Masler, will not be able to run again (no, not broken legs...new job) and a few positions weren't even filled last year. Those responsibilities had to be divided amongst the rest of us. So, if you felt GLASS helped you in the past, help GLASS now...RUN FOR OFFICE! (Hmmm.. Mr. Electronic Wizard, is this any better? Just 14 lines instead of four paragraphs!)

I had a good time last Saturday, I cleaned my computer room. You know, all those printouts, magazines, books, and empty pizza cartons we plan on getting around to someday. What made is fun was finding every issue of the EyE GLASS Newsletter for this year. It's interesting to see all the things we covered and did. From the news-letters, memory, and miscellaneous notes I found, I compiled an article called GLASS YEAR - 1988. Look it over (in this issue) and see all the things we did this year, it's more than I first thought...very impressive! What do we want to do next year?

Oh yes, you noticed you got this newsletter (the EyE GLASS) in the mail if you didn't make it to the meeting? We (the attenders of the planning meetings) figured it would help you keep in touch with what's happening at the general meetings when your unable to attend. Too bad you missed out on the give-aways though. I've noticed other clubs hold raffles for members, ours is free. Although our general dues did not increase, the Michigan Atari Magazine portion went up from fifty cents an issue to a buck. Well, we started out paying eighty cents but it went up to ninety five cents. Who knows what will happen from here. That put a small hurt on the treasury. Now, if the cost raises again, we (the club treasury) will pay for it. If the cost lowers we will have more funds for software give-away.

Welcome three new members in November. Thomas Heiden of Warren, Dan Kageff of Center Line, and Ashley Lipson of West Bloomfield. We hope we can make you feel at home!

Now, for the GLASS GOLD STAR Member Of The Month I would like to introduce you to Garrett Buban of Sterling Hts. Even though Garrett is one of our younger members (age 14) his interest in computers and computing goes back many years. He is currently writing a shareware program (due to become GLASSWARE upon completion) that can load an ASCII (text) file into memory with the capabilities of block mark and print, line and page scroll, and much more. His current favorite language is GFA Basic. Using version 2.0 and a compiler, he can produce some impressive programs. He would like version 3.0 (for Christmas maybe?) especially if there were a compiler for it. Garrett even led a GLASS study session in programming in BASIC a few months back. He isn't afraid to ask questions or give answers so talk to him at the meetings. A member since August of 1987, his attendance level is very high. Currently a freshman at South Lake High School in Sterling Hts., his future leans to programming after getting a doctorate degree, (probably at MIT). He says he likes the club and I take that as a great compliment.

GARRETT, we would like to thank you for your involvement and contribution in this user group and want you to know it's members like you that makes us great. We would also like to thank Garrett's father for providing him with the transportation to and from the meetings...I'm sure many young adults today would like to have parents that show the interest and concern you do!

ASTI Talks About...What did I miss in 1988?

By not being a GLASS member or missing some of the meetings in 1988 here is a re-cap of some of the things we saw and did (and YOU missed)! ...and this is for only 11 months.

Topics Jan. - Word processing seminar
Feb. - Mike Gillies' MIDI MUSIC MADNESS
Mar. - Data Bases seminar
Apr. - DeskTop Publishing seminar
May - Telecommunications demonstration
June - Drawing programs seminar
July - Programming in GFABasic seminar
Aug. - The best of Public Domain software
Sep. - DeskTop Accessories
Oct. - Printers - 9 pin, 24 pin, ink jet, laser, and font carts.
Nov. - External storage devices

Hardware Jan. - the two new club 520STfm's

Feb. - Keyboards, amplifiers, and speakers for Midi-Music.
Mar. - Hard drives, first club 520STfm with 1 meg. upgrade.
May - Null-Modem cable for ST link, print buffer by Practical Solutions.
Oct. - MEGA4 ST, Atari Laser Printer, Hewlett Packard DeskJet, Tandy Color, Panasonic 24-pin with sheet-feeder, CITOH 9-pin, and several more forgotten.
Nov. - MEGADISK, SWITHCBACK, DeskCart, ATARI hard-drive, and a home-built 64 meg. hard-drive

Software Jan. - Word Perfect, GFA Basic, Animator, and Perfect Match.
Feb. - Music Studio, ARC/ARCSHELL, Dungeon Master
Mar. - Test Drive, LabelJRB, DBMaster One, Base Two
Apr. - Publishing Partner, Slaygon, Universal Item Sel. and TURBO-ST.
May - Michtron BBS, FLASH, Slaygon, MT-C Shell, ChessMaster 2000
June - VDOS, NeoChrome, Degas, Director, NeoDesk
July - GFABasic 2.0, GUNSHIP, Tempus, ST-Talk Professional (demo)
Aug. - Wheel Of Fortune, BackGammon, YAHTZEE
Sep. - Many public domain DeskTop ACCessories
Oct. - Word300, PublisherST, 1stWord+, 24P_DUMP, JetSet
Nov. - Desk Manager, FileSpy, New TOS (Beta)

Door Prizes (Members simply had to be in attendance on night of the meeting.) Jan. - An 'ATARI SAFARI' duffel bag and one GLASS Library Disk
Feb. - Dungeon Master and one GLASS Disk-Of-The-Month.
Mar. - Thunder and one GLASS Disk-Of-The-Month.
Apr. - Universal Item Selector Vers. 1.0
May - ChessMaster 2000.
June - Personal Money Manager and START Quarterly with disk.
July - GFA Basic 2.0
Aug. - one choice from GLASS Public Domain Library.
Sep. - Universal Item Selector Vers. 2.0, two GFABasic Reference Cards, and a ST Start Magazine with disk.
Oct. - A VCR Movie (new but non-computer related) and the Oct. issue of START magazine with disk.
Nov. - two choices from GLASS Public Domain Library.
Shareware Collection Jan., Feb. - ARCSHELL collections continued from 1987.
Mar., Apr., May - ARCSHELL closed with $55 for author Charles F. Johnson. LABELJRB opened for donations.
June, July, Aug. - LABELJRB closed with $15 for PACE (Pittsburgh Atari Users Group), DSLIDE and PICSW7 open for donations.
Sep., Oct., Nov. - DSLIDE/PCSW7 closed with $37 for author John Brochu, SANDP21.PRG open for donations.

OTHER Feb.- First 'official' GLASS officers installed:
President - Steve Mileski
Vice President - Byron Johnson
Treasurer - Emil Maslar
Librarian - Todd Meitzner
Public Relations - Mike Gillie
Corresponding Secretary - Paul Kubicz
Mar.- First club 520STfm 1 meg. upgrade completed.
Aug.- GLASS applies for Tax-exempt Non-Profit Corporation status.
Sep.- First GLASS NewsDisk...it's a hit! A new meeting room, larger.
Dec.- First annual GLASS OPEN HOUSE AND MIDI-MAZE INVITATIONAL!

Glass Supporters

GLASS wishes to acknowledge and thank the following for the support and encouragement they have shown us in the past year. RITE-WAY Computers, owner Ron Keiler, 11557 12 Mile Rd., Warren, MI has a) donated for free or at cost, software for the give-away program, b) provided ST equipment and other hardware for demonstration. MichTron, president Gordon Monnier, 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI has a) donated for free or at cost, software for the give-away program, b) provided us with new software for review and demonstration.

GRASS
GRAND RAPIDS ATARI SYSTEMS SUPPORTERS

Grass's next meeting is January 3rd, at the Wyoming Public Library, 3350 Michael SW. Time: 6:30 p.m.

George Nosky	President/Treasurer	(616) 942-1527
2440 Parkridge Dr. SE, Grand Rapids MI 49506.		
Gary Heitz	Vice President	(616) 676-0112
Marvin Waid	Secretary	(616) 866-1998
Chuck Baughman	Librarian	(616) 795-7373
Gerry Borysiak	Director	(616) 896-9358
Steve Gilbert	Director	(616) 891-1785
Marek Kulikowiec	Director	(616) 957-2646
Tim Feenstra	Membership Chair	(616) 784-6230

[Editors' Note: The January Meeting was election night, but the results weren't available at printing time. We hope everyone at GRASS had a pleasaant holiday. We didn't receive the usual December articles from George in time to print include them in this issue. Please accept our apologies.]

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Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiast members receive the Michigan Atari Magazine, a monthly magazine keeping them informed of what is new in MACE and the whole Atari community, as part of the $20 yearly dues. Those members who do nont wish to receive MAM may opt for the $12/yr dues which does not include MAM. Members are also entitled to purchase disks from the 8bit and ST public domain software libraries. These libraries are always growing and expanding, with the 8bit library at more than 400 disks and the ST near 200! Eightbit disks are $3 and the ST disks are $4 each.

The most important benefit you receive is the help and support from (and interaction with) other Atari owners. If you're having a problem, need advice about a software package or whatever, your fellow MACE officers can and will help. That's what a user group is all about -- helping each other get the most from our computing.

If you contribute an article which is published in MAM, you are entitled to a free disk from one of the club's libraries. MACE can be contacted at PO Box 2785, Southfield, MI 48037 or by calling Bill Rayl (313) 973-8825 or Bob Retelle (313) 483-2114.

Minutes from November MACE Meeting

The November meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was held on Nov. 15 in the Southfield Civic Center. President Bill Rayl called the meeting to order at 7:45pm, announcing the topic for the evening was Desktop Publishing.

Meeting Coordinator Bob Retelle spent several minutes discussing his visit to the Toronto Atari Federation's "Atari User's Convention" on 11/6. From his own perspective, Bob noted this was "the best Atari show I've been to yet." Bob also noted there was very little news coming out of Comdex over the networks.

Bill announced MACE has been offered the opportunity to host the next AtariFest in Michigan. Nothing has been formally decided to date, the officers are approaching the issue with caution. Bill indicated the club will likely entertain nominations for election of a Convention Manager (as per the Constitution) if anything concrete materializes out of this.

Bill described a demonstration of GOE, the 8bit "ST Jr" graphics operating environment, he had seen recently. It was in fact running on an ST which was running ST Xformer, the 8bit emulator by Dereck Mihocha. This was an interesting tribute to the quality of BOTH programs!

A MACE Appreciation Award was given the member Bill Boles for his articles to the Journal and his support of the ST Sig.

After a brief intermission, the room was divided into 3 areas where Desktop Publishing was discussed for both the ST and the XL/XEs. Bill demonstrated Publisher ST (TimeWorks) and Page Stream (Publishing Partner Pro, by SoftLogik) while Tom Sturza showed how to use News Station to very attentive audiences. Ed Hanson displayed the new Panasonic KX-P 1124 printer, showing off it's versatility and features. This printer is selling in area stores for approx $399, and is sure to be a popular sale item during the Christmas buying season.

The next meeting of MACE will be held on 12/20. This will be the annual Christmas Party meeting, with door prizes and munchies. Members only on this night.

President's Note

Howdy fellow Atarians! Not much space this month, so I'll keep it short. At the November meeting, the officers of MACE officially announced that we are beginning negotiations with Atari to produce an Atari Show here in Michigan. Tentative dates are May 6 and 7, and we have looked at many sites around the area. Right now, we're planning on having a Show at the Airport Hilton at Detroit Metro Airport. We should have much more to tell you at the December meeting.

Please check the label on the back of this magazine...if you're close to expiring, see Pattie at the meeting or send a check to the PO Box so you don't miss a month of MAM. Also, if you're moving, tell Pattie your new address so she can make the appropriate changes in the membership records.

A number of members told me at the November meeting they thought the new meeting format worked very well for them. If you have any comments or concerns about how we're structuring our meetings now, please contact me.

Concerning the December meeting, if you're a Games fan, this is a meeting you won't want to miss. We'll be showing some of the latest and greatest games for your Atari and giving away piles of Christmas presents to attending members. See you there!

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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the first Saturday before the 18th of every month at 2 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows: December 17, 1988 January 19, 1989

LeRoy Valley	President	686-6796
Marty Schmidt	Treasurer/Sec.	792-6029
Al Jennings	ST Disk lib.	790-1980
Ted Beauchamp	8 bit Disk Lib.	686-8872
Char Davis	8 bit Editor	686-4170

Club dues are $20 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8bits and ST's, and full access to the clubs public domain library. We currently have 150 8bit disks and 70 ST disks. 8bit disks cost $1 each, and ST disks cost $2 each. Check your mailing label. If you need to renew or you haven't even joined yet, then do it now!

Letter from the Prez

The November meeting had a great turn out...for the ST'ers that is. We had 1 (count 'em ONE) 8bit member present. The 8bit equipment volunteer didn't come, but it didn't matter because the person who was supposed to give the demo didn't show either! Anyway, it was the largest attendance since last spring, and I think that everybody had a great time! Please let me know if there's anything I can do to improve the meetings...

STill to Come!

The month of December brings our annual Christmas party and Swap meet. Once again, I'll endeavor to bring coffee (I'll even remember the filter holder this time!), and it would be nice if everybody brought a little goodie to pass around (like cookies, brownies, christmas candy, etc.). I'll be on hand to personally sample each and every goodie brought! Since this is a swap meet, feel free to bring ANYTHING you want to get rid of. We'll have two ST systems set up so that you can try any software that you're interested in, and I'm sure that there will be a "Dandy December" disk of the month available! I may (as usual) have some "top secret" surprises to demo at the meeting, so be sure and show up!

RelicST to Relish!

The month of November featured Desktop Publishing. LeRoy Valley demoed The Timeworks Desktop Publisher ST (hereafter called Pub ST) in conjunction with the Hewlett Packard DeskJet (DJ). LeRoy has worked extensively with both Pub ST and Publishing Partner, and even had PageStream on hand at the meeting! To demo Pub ST, LeRoy simply created a 1 page Newsletter from scratch at the meeting. Everything in Pub ST is straight forward and easy to understand. I dare say you could actually run Pub ST productively WITHOUT the manual!! Since part of the demo also involved using Scan Art from Migraph, LeRoy had the club members select several pictures from the Scan Art disk. He then imported the graphics into the Newsletter, and had the audience construct a story to fit each printer. Needless to say, at this point members became quite imaginative. The first story had to do with Marty flying some ancient contraption, and getting shot down by deer hunters. The second story struck closer to home, as it concerned LeRoy searching the world over for a new printer. The printer of choice became the Zulu 1000+, manufactured in Booga-Booga, Africa. This printer comes bundled with the infamous Drum Master Elite font package by Shrunken Head Software (and other features too numerous to mention...). Once the story was concocted, LeRoy then demoed the DJ printer. This incredible printer prints at 300 dpi (identical to a Laser!) and costs about 1/3 of a Laser printer! Output looked tremendous, and it prints at a decent speed (240 cps). If you're even considering a 24 pin printer...PLEASE take a look at the DJ. It's available from Applied Progressive Electronics for $675. 1-800-447-1176. After the demo was done, we raffled off the Scan Art package and LeRoy won the package! Anyway, most of the members present agreed that this was one of the funnest meetings of the year! I hope that we can keep that type of energy flowing year round.

8bit Equipment Volunteers for December:
Ted Beauchamp 800 XL, Disk Drive Nelson Greene Monitor
ST Equipment Volunteers for December:
Margaret Schmidt 1040 ST & Monitor Al Jennings1040 ST & Monitor

Remember, if you're bringing equipment, please bring all of the necessary cables (such as power cords, monitor cords, mouses, etc.).

The November meeting of the Washtenaw Atari Users Group was held on Tuesday, November 8th, at State Street Computer in Ann Arbor. President Jon Brode called the meeting to order at 8:00pm. There was continued discussion of the possibility of WAUG becoming an officially recognized student organization at UofM. A "membership recruitment" drive is in effect to come up with several more members who are also students.

Jon announced having read an article in a magazine about the possibility of members getting a "user group discount" on the purchase price of Word Perfect ST. The ad indicated a $155 price tag. Interested persons should contact Jon.

Treasurer Dick Selke gave details of the club's financial status, and indicated that the declining balance is good reason for members to consider buying some library disks SOON. 8bit Librarian Mike Millage announced a bundle special of a year's worth of Antic disks, and one remaining package of Print Shop icons which was snapped up on the spot. ST Librarian Russ Crum announced there is already an update to the library disk he dispensed last month, and announced this month's Disk Of The Month contained a P.D. CAD program (actually TWO disks...) but warned that it requires at least 1 meg and a monochrome monitor. Newsletter Editor Anton Maljе urged the members to start submitting articles for publication in MAM.

Jon distributed a survey to all members, asking for its im-

mediate return, to determine the members' interests and input for future topics/discussions. Jon also announced to following topics for the next several months:

Dec. - Christmas Party/Games Night Jan. - Telecommunications Feb. - Databases Mar. - Utilities

Bob Carlini gave a detailed demonstration of GFA Draft Plus, showing how he uses it at work to draw blueprints. Bob displayed a sample print made on a 9-pin dot printer, the results of which are excellent. Bob's demo included an unexpected demonstration of Macro Mouse, and several people took great delight in watching a self-running demo!

Roger Tanner showed his interest in Easy Draw, noting that it was less technical in nature and more like a cross between Desktop Publishing and an art-type drawing program.

Don Neff detailed some of the differences between "drawing programs" and "CAD programs" and then took us on a grand tour of Circuit Maker, Athena II, First CAD and then attempted to show CAD 3D until it was discovered this package does not work well (at all, as a matter of fact...) on a monochrome system.

The next meeting of WAUG will be held on Tuesday, December 13th, at State Street Computer in Ann Arbor.

A Few Words from a Remote Member

Hello fellow WAUG members, I live in Northwestern Montana about 15 miles from Glacier National Park. Some of you may have heard of our local Red Bench fire this summer. Well, that was about 20 miles north, and we could watch the glowing red sky at night. It's all mountains around here and beautiful. I'll send you some pictures real soon. For all you downhill skiers, we have one of the best areas in the country only 20 miles from here; it's called the BIG mountain.

I know of only two other ST users and the same number of 8bit users in the valley. I plan on running an ad in the local paper to see if I can smoke out other Atari users. There must be more of us around here (I hope). As far as dealers, there is a new one (20 miles away) who will order anything I want and has some old 8bit junk for sale, but I can mail order what I need and get it cheaper and quicker, so I don't get to see him very often.

I've joined the local user group; it's in Missoula, MT. That's 150 miles away, so I have not made it to any meetings, but I have logged some hours on the phone and talked to some of the members in person. They have been a lot of help. It's a small group that has members from all over the state. There is also a dealer in Missoula, but they just want to sell computers and aren't much help after the sale. The user group has pretty much given up on them; they push Amiga (ARRGG!!).

I have received three MAMs and think they are great. I think the hardware project articles are super. It's just one heck of a publication, you people should be very proud of yourselves. I belong to at least seven groups to get news, but I will not be renewing three or four of them, as they are not good enough. I'm sure I'll be renewing my subscription to MAM for a long time. Well, that's it for now. Steve Filler, Columbia Falls, MT

From the Treasurer, Dick Selke

Eddie Allison renewed his membership in October. We thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you at the meetings.

NOTICE...to all future and renewal members of WAUG, the membership fee is now $15 per year, which includes 12 meetings and 12 issue of MAM. Please make your check or money order payable to Dick Selke, and mail it to 31139 Cooley Dr., Westland, MI 48185. You can also bring a check or cash to the meeting.

The Proposal (In the rough)

Here is the proposed language of this agreement. Please understand that this is preliminary to modifications put forward by any party and ultimate ratification and agreement by the clubs and the Rayls.

"The undersigned hereby represent that they are duly empowered to act for the parties bound by this agreement and each asserts that (to their knowlege) there is no party in interest who has not been a party to this resolution.

"It is resolved by the undersigned User Groups (hereafter, "the Clubs") and Unicorn Publications, (hereafter "Unicorn") publisher of Michigan Atari Magazine (hereafter "MAM"), that any and all claim to rights of ownership, control, or transfer of MAM is held or transferred exclusively to Unicorn, its heirs, or assigns.

"Further, it is resolved that the Clubs shall be represented in an Advisory Board (hereafter "the Board") The Board shall advise and inform Unicorn on any and all matters affecting MAM.

"Unicorn shall keep the Board fully informed of all matters affecting the publication of MAM, including but not limited to finances, distribution, and publicity.

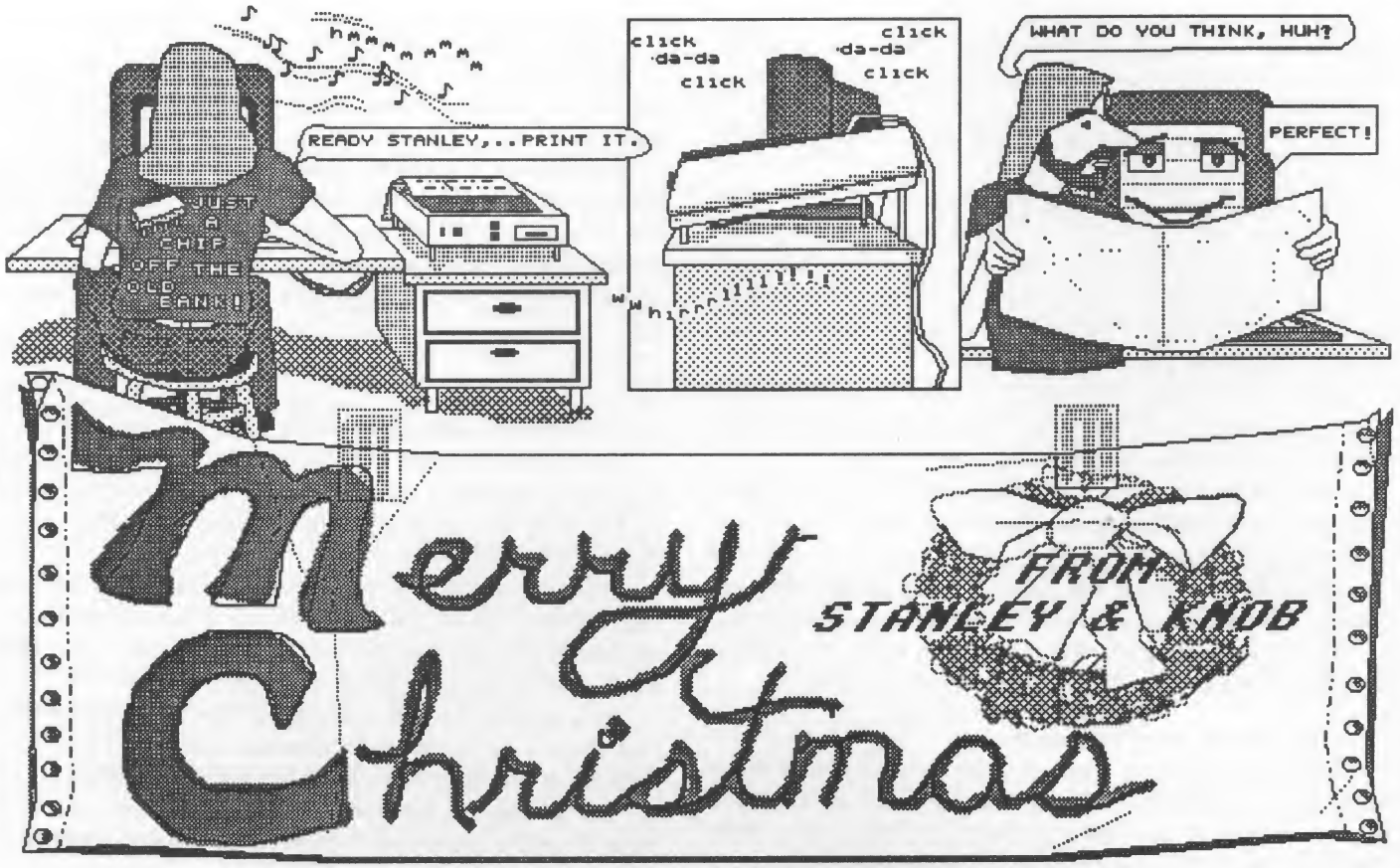
"The Board shall keep any specific details on any matter disclosed by Unicorn as confidential upon the request of Unicorn. Unicorn agrees to consider and act on matters of Board advisment in good faith, but Unicorn is not bound to act as advised.

"Unicorn agrees to continued inclusion of club-specific material the content of which shall be entirely controlled by the Clubs. No specific guarantees of space allocation size or proportion are to be inferred by this agreement.

"If the participating club constituency changes at any time, the clubs participating at that time shall be represented in the Board. Unicorn agrees to bind any transferee of their interests in MAM to these terms.

"This Resolution shall be considered as one inclusive agreement, and no part of this resolution shall be breached without the entire resolution being voided. In the event of such a breach, the parties or their heirs or assigns are returned to their respective postions and rights as of the day prior to the signing of this agreement."

[Editors' note: We don't agree with some of the phrasing and statements of this proposal. Your feedback is welcome.]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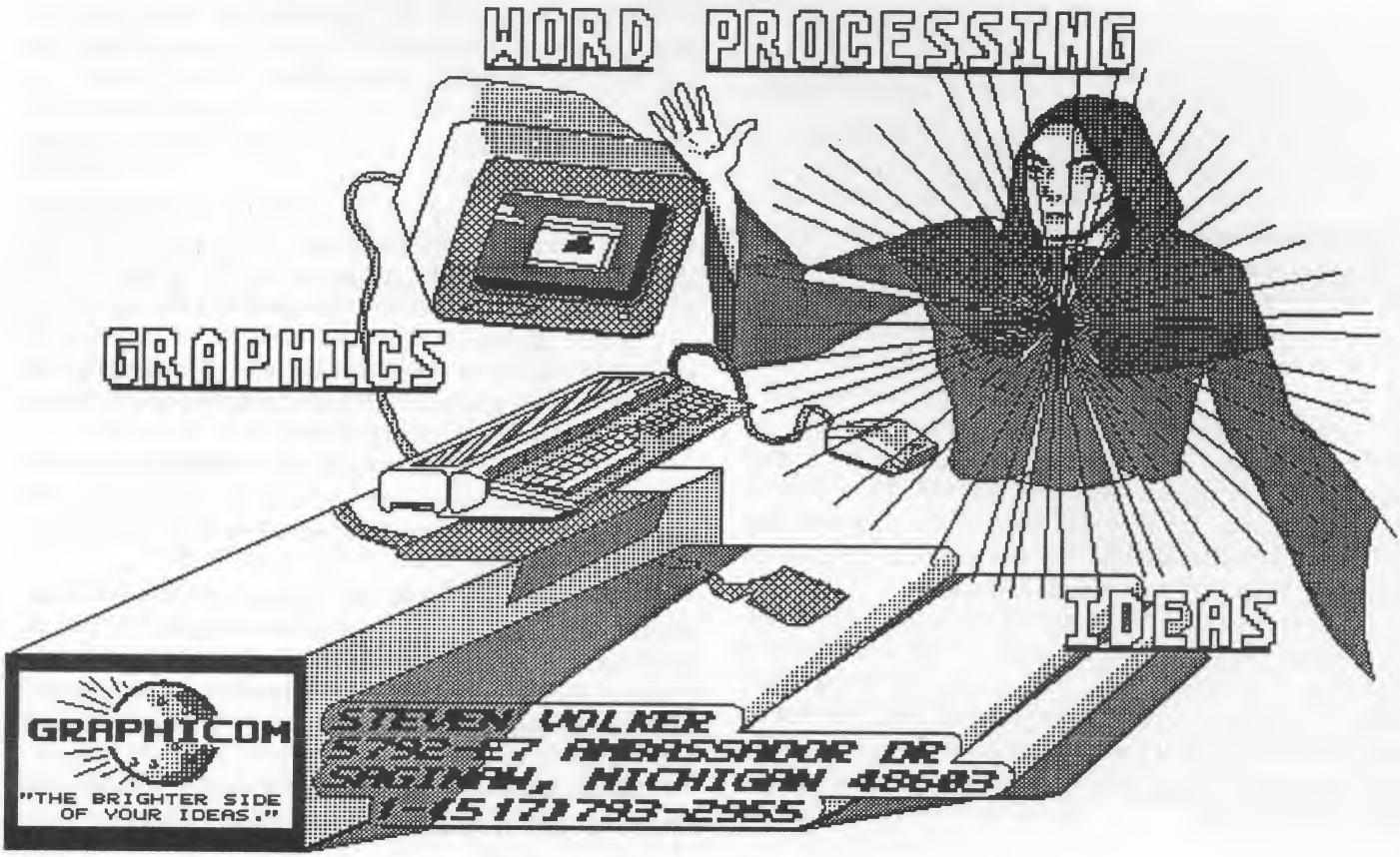
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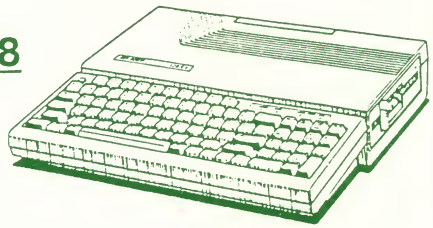

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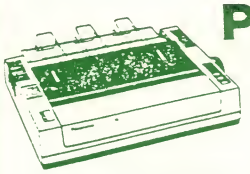

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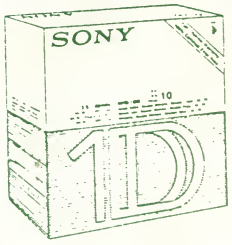

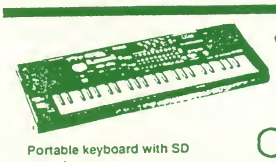

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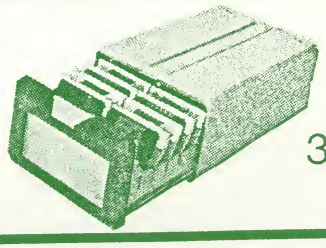

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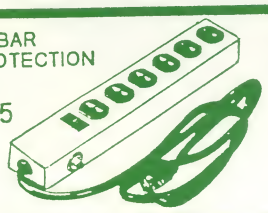

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